

From the sermon, "Blood of The New Testament - The Case For Wine in The Church"
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FAQs

Q: What about the Red Wine Tablets? How effective are they or should I drink the liquid red wine? Would the tablets have the same effect? Do they contain the same ingredients as the liquid wine?

A: I am always hesitant to change things that God ordained. There are several reasons why the wine is better. First, the alcohol content itself provides many of the benefits. The studies show that all alcoholic drinks in moderation provide some reduction in heart disease deaths. Alcohol also helps the body to absorb many of wine's other beneficial ingredients. Alcohol is chemically a solvent. Second, the red wine extracts often only contain a few of the ingredients. The most credited wine ingredient for longevity is Resveratrol. If you simply prefer not to drink the wine, the Female Longevity™ version of Vitarol™ has 50mg per dose of Resveratrol and a host of other longevity enhancing ingredients. This is a much better alternative than taking just red wine extract tablets as you will get over 40 other proven nutrients. www.Vitarol.com.

Q: What brand of wine do you drink?

A: My personal wine is from www.duplinwinery.com. It is called Hatteras Red. This is a Muscadine grape wine. Muscadine grapes have the highest concentration of Resveratrol of any of the species of grapes. The Hatteras Red is very easy to drink compared to most wines and contains 12% alcohol. They can ship to the following states: AK, AZ, CA, CT, CO, FL, IL, IA, LA, MI, MN, MO, MT, NY, NC, NE, NV, NH, NM, ND, OR, SC, TX, VT VA, WA, WV, WI, WY. It is sold in grocery stores NC, SC, FL, VA and TN. The Hatteras Red is 7.49 U.S.

The wine that we serve at the church is Rashi™ Light Red Concord. This wine contains 6% alcohol and is extremely easy to drink. It tastes very close to juice. Rashi™ Light Red Concord is available in most grocery stores in areas with a high Jewish population since this is a kosher wine. The Rashi™ Light Red Concord is 4.99 U.S. in grocery stores. It is less expensive online but remember wine in glass bottles is heavy to ship.

What does the Bible say?

Wine or Grape Juice

There seems to be an exercise on the part of some among us as to whether wine or grape juice should be used at the Lord's Supper. We believe that on this subject, as well as on all other subjects relating to church order, the Word of God gives us the answer.

Because the Scripture does *not* say, "And He took the *wine* and gave thanks and gave it to them saying Drink ye all of it," or "I will not drink henceforth of this *wine* until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom," but uses the expressions "cup" and "fruit of the vine," some contend that it was grape juice and not wine which the Lord used. That both of the above expressions are symbolical, none, we believe, will deny; therefore, we must find out just what is meant by them.

"THE CUP"

The first occurrence of this word is in Matthew 20:20-23 where the mother of Zebedee's children came to the Lord and asked Him that her sons might sit, the one on His right hand and the other on His left, in His kingdom. To this request, the Lord replied, "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of 'the cup' that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

Then again in John 18:11 we read, "'The cup' which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" It is clear from both of these Scriptures that the Lord is referring to His death, or the judgment He was to bear in connection with His death. This settles the meaning of the word "cup" as used by our Lord as being "judgment."

At the last supper, when the Lord took the cup and gave it to His disciples, He said, "This is my blood of the new testament" (Matt. 26:28). We know "the cup" did not contain one drop of the Lord's blood, but was only symbolical of it, and set forth His death under judgment. What was *in* the cup we shall see later.

"THE FRUIT OF THE VINE"

When the Lord gave them the cup, He said: (Matt. 26:29) "I tell you that I will never again taste the produce of the vine till that day when I shall drink the new wine with you in my Father's Kingdom" (Weymouth's and Goodspeed's translations). Greenfield's Greek Lexicon, and Strong's and Young's Concordances give the meaning of the Greek word "kainos" (translated in the King James Version "new") as "fresh," or "newly made," contrasting it with that which was old. This must have weight with us in making our decision as to what was in the cup. The only logical conclusion, it seems to us, is that it was wine (old) which they were using at the Passover Supper, and in the Father's kingdom it would be new wine. Doubtless both have a typical or dispensational meaning; however, we are not concerned with this at present, but with what was actually in the cup.

WINE--OLD TESTAMENT

The word "wine" occurs 193 times in the King James Version of the Old Testament, and 159 times the Hebrew words used mean "fermented" and "intoxicating." This was the wine used in their drink offerings unto Jehovah; not once do we find grape juice or fresh must of the grape used in any of their offerings.

The Hebrew word "shekar," meaning "strong drink"--that which is extremely intoxicating--occurs once, in Numbers 28:7, where it is in connection with the drink offering.

The word "chamar," which occurs 7 times, means "fermented," and is used in connection with the burnt offering (Ezra 6:9). It is the same word used in Daniel 5 of the wine drunk at Belshazzar's feast, which undoubtedly must have been intoxicating.

The word "tirowsh" is used 39 times and sometimes means wine, sometimes, fresh grape juice; however, this word does not occur in connection with the wine used in the offerings.

It is striking, to say the least, that the "wine" used in their drink offerings to Jehovah was fermented and intoxicating--which fact should have weight with us in deciding what was used by our Lord while here on earth in the Passover feasts which He attended.

THE PASSOVER SUPPER

Do we have any way of finding out what the Jews used at this Feast? If we can settle this question, it will settle what was used at the Lord's Supper by the Lord Himself. If it was the custom to use grape juice at this Feast, we find no mention of it anywhere in the Word of God. Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History--A.D. 1694--says: "The Passover is celebrated with bread and wine. The bread is broken after thanks and passed amongst them, and the wine is diluted with water and passed amongst them. Four cups of wine are required at this feast." Other historians tell us the same. Let me quote from Dr. Edersheim's book, "The Temple. Its Ministry and Service as they were at the time of Christ":

"The use of wine in the Paschal Supper, though not mentioned in the Law, was strictly enjoined by tradition. According to the Jerusalem Talmud, it was intended to express Israel's joy on the Paschal night, and even the poorest must have 'at least four cups, though he were to receive money for it from the poor's box.' If he cannot otherwise obtain, the Talmud adds, 'he must sell or pawn his coat, or hire himself out for these four cups of wine.' Red wine alone was to be used at the Paschal Supper, and always mixed with water. Each of the four cups must contain at least the fourth of a quarter of an hin (the hin--one gallon, two pints).

"The Paschal Supper itself commenced by the head of the 'company' taking the first cup of wine in his hand, and 'giving thanks' over it in these words: 'Blessed art Thou, Jehovah our God, who first created the fruit of the vine!' The first cup of wine was then drunk and each washed his hands. It was evidently at this time that the Saviour in His self-humiliation proceeded to wash the disciples' feet. Then the services continued until the third cup was drunk. Immediately afterwards the third cup was drunk, a special blessing having been spoken over it. There cannot be any reasonable doubt that this was the cup which our Lord connected with His own Supper. It is called in Jewish writing, just as by St. Paul, 'the cup of blessing.' The service concluded with the fourth cup, over which the second portion of the 'Hallel' was sung, consisting of Psalms 115, 116, 117, and 118. In this manner was the Paschal Supper celebrated by the Jews at the time when our Lord celebrated it for the last time when He sat down to it with His disciples."

From above, no one would attempt to deny that the Lord, on that night in which He was betrayed, used wine and not grape juice. It does not seem reasonable that He would have used wine at the Passover Supper and then have gotten grape juice for the Lord's Supper. I have seen and tasted the wine used by the orthodox Jews at their Passover Supper as they celebrate it now, and most certainly it is intoxicating.

I am well aware that temperance people state in their writings that the Jews did not use wine at their Passover Suppers in the time of our Lord. This, however, should in no wise lead us to believe that the Lord used grape juice, even if the Jews had departed from most of the teachings of Scripture. There is, however, no authentic evidence that the Jews had given up the use of wine at the Passover.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

That some came to the Lord's Supper drunk (tipsy, F.W.G.) is most certain, and the Lord laid His hand upon them in judgment: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep." We do not find that they were condemned for the *use* of wine but for the *abuse* of it. The early disciples had what they called a "Love Feast" just prior to the Lord's Supper. This took the place of the Passover meal. At this Love Feast they would drink too much wine and become drunk or tipsy, and then go to the Lord's Supper tipsy, and for this they were condemned. It would not seem probable that they would have wine at their Love Feast and grape juice at the Lord's Supper.

CUSTOM OF THE CHURCH

The so-called "Church Fathers" give no account, as far as we are able to find, of grape juice being used at the Lord's Supper. Note quotations above from Mosheim and Edersheim. It was not until recent years, comparatively speaking, that the question came up, and grape juice began to be used. As a matter of fact, it was not until the "Temperance" question became an issue that grape juice was substituted for wine within the denomination. Not all, however, use grape juice now.

CUSTOM AMONG BRETHREN

As far as we are able to find out, it has always been the practice among us to use wine at the Lord's Supper. During "Prohibition" days, when it was difficult and expensive to secure wine, some assemblies used grape juice. In other assemblies where persons coming in from the denominations predominated, grape juice was used. It is the rule now among us to use wine, except in perhaps a very few cases.

OBJECTIONS

The main objection raised to the use of wine is that it might be that some person, who was a drunkard before his conversion, would get a taste of wine at the Lord's Supper and go back to his old habit. Our reply to such an objection is that it is inconceivable that the God who saves a person would allow his downfall in commemorating the death of His Son.

CONCLUSION

The Lord changed the water into wine at the marriage in Cana of Galilee; Paul instructed Timothy to take a *little* wine for his stomach's sake and his often infirmities; our Lord did not condemn its use, nor did any of the New Testament writers; an elder was told not to be given too *much* wine; the saints are told *not to be drunk* with wine, but to be filled with the Spirit. What more is needed?

--J.F. Stebbins

from Moments With the Book www.mwtb.org