

Did Jesus Make Alcoholic Wine?

By Ron Boatwright

The miracle of Jesus turning the water into wine is found in John 2:1-11. Some people try to justify the drinking of alcohol by saying that Jesus made alcoholic wine. But was the wine Jesus created alcoholic? When they ran out of wine at the wedding feast at Cana, Jesus had them fill six water pots to the brim, each of which held about 20 gallons. This would make a total of about 120 gallons. When it was taken to the master of the wedding feast to taste, he was surprised and said, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now" (John 2:10). The good wine in those days was grape juice that had not yet fermented.

The Greek word "OINOS" which is translated wine in the Bible can be either fermented or unfermented wine. We see in Isaiah 65:8, "Thus says the Lord, 'As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one says do not destroy it'". What is the alcoholic content in the new wine in a cluster of grapes? Zero. There is no alcohol in a cluster of grapes. Also God says in Isaiah 16:10, "No treaders will tread out wine in the presses; I have made their shouting cease." Again we know the alcoholic content of the new wine that is being treaded out in the grape presses is zero. This wine is only fresh grape juice.

Jesus says in Matthew 9:17, "Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved." New wine, which is unfermented wine as we have seen in Isaiah 16:10, 65:8, is not placed into old wine skins because the old wine skins probably have been contaminated with fermentation bacteria which will ferment the new wine. If new wine is placed into old wineskins, then the new wine will become fermented and the fermentation gasses will break the wineskins and the wine will pour out. But Jesus says that you put new wine (fresh grape juice) into new wineskins (which have not been contaminated with fermentation bacteria) "and both are preserved".

Jesus did not create an alcoholic wine. God's word forbade giving alcoholic wine to someone else. Habakkuk 2:15 says, "Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor, pressing him to the bottle, even to make him drunk, that you may look on his nakedness." Jesus would have disobeyed God's word as found in Habakkuk and sinned if he had made an alcoholic wine, which was

drunk by others. But Hebrews 4:15 says that Jesus "was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." Jesus never sinned or He could not have died for us. If He sinned He would have had to die for His own sin.

We have seen in the above scriptures that the wine Jesus made was not fermented. It was fresh grape juice, which is also referred to as wine (OINOS). To say that Jesus made 120 gallons of fermented wine is blasphemy. God's word says "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1).