

# DRINK OFFERINGS

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## 1. Definition:

- a. A **drink offering** or **libation** is a portion of wine poured out to a god or to the gods before drinking as part of worship.
  1. Sometimes, making a drink offering was done to propose a truce or ratify a solemn treaty of peace. It could be offered at the conclusion of a peace treaty.
  2. It could also be a fee paid to an official.
  3. It was especially offered for a truce, a declaration of peace (an armistice), between warring factions before their god (Zeus) during the ancient Olympic games.
  4. Often it was part of an offering at a feast.
- b. Biblically, it was a portion of wine offered with every sacrifice made as part of the worship of God. It was poured over the sacrifice as part of the ritual.

## 2. Vocabulary:

- a. נָסַק - nasak - Hebrew verb, meaning: to pour out as water or wine, as a drink offering (Hosea 9:4)
  - b. נֶסֶק - nesek - Heb. noun, meaning: a drink offering (Gen. 35:14; Deut. 32:38)
  - c. שָׁפַק - shappak - Heb. vb., meaning: to pour out (Ex. 4:9; 29:7, 12; Levit. 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34)
  - d. שֶׁפֶק - sheppek - Heb. n., meaning: a pouring out (Levit. 4:12)
  - e. σπένδω - spendo - Greek verb, meaning: to pour out as a drink offering (Phil. 2:17; 2 Tim. 4:6)
  - f. σπόνδη - sponde - Gk. n., meaning: a drink offering or libation (Deut. 32:38 in the Septuagint (LXX) for נֶסֶק)
  - g. ἐκχέω or ἐκχύω - ekcheo or ekchuo - Gk. vb., meaning: to pour out as blood (Levit. 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34; Ex. 29:12 in the Septuagint (LXX) for שָׁפַק; Luke 22:20)
3. The first mention of a **drink offering** or **libation** in the Bible is found in Genesis 35:14 when God promised Jacob the continuation of the covenant that He made with Abraham and Isaac before him. (Gen. 35:9-15)
  4. The second mention of a **drink offering** is found in Exodus 25:29 when God gave the instructions to Moses to make dishes, pans, jars, and bowls out of gold with which to pour **libations**, “*drink offerings.*”
  5. The third mention is found in Exodus 29:40, 41 where the **libation** is specifically linked with the sacrifice of a lamb. The amount of the **libation** is given as “*one-fourth of a hin of wine*” which is equivalent to about one and a half pints. (Ex. 29:38-42)

6. On the day of **first fruits**, the beginning of the twenty-five days of barley harvest, “*you shall offer a male lamb one year old without defect for a burnt offering to the Lord.*” It shall be offered with a grain offering, “*two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil,*” and “*with its libation, a fourth of a hin of wine.*” (Levit. 23:9-14)
7. Israel was to observe “*the Feast of the Harvest of the first fruits,*”
  - a. This was a second **first fruits**, also known as Pentecost, fifty days after the first **first fruits**. (Exodus 23:16)
  - b. “*Also, on the day of the second first fruits, when you present a new grain offering to the Lord in your Feast of Weeks you shall have a holy convocation; ...*” (Num. 28:26)
  - c. “*Besides the continual burnt offering and its grain offering, you shall present them with their libations.*” (Num. 28:31; Levit. 23:17, 18)
8. On the **Feast of Booths**, for seven days you shall present “*offerings by fire to the Lord...burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and libations, ...*” (Levit. 23:34-37)
9. When Israel entered into the promised land, they were to make offerings by fire to the Lord. They were to present burnt offerings from the herd or from the flock; and with their offerings they were to present grain offerings of fine flour mixed with oil along with their **libations of wine**. (Num. 15:5, 7, 10)
10. There are over sixty references to **libations** (drink offerings) in the Old Testament. Apparently, they are all made with wine.
11. Pagan and idolatrous worship included **drink offerings of wine and blood**, and even **human sacrifices**. (Deut. 32:38; Psa. 16:4; 106:37, 38; Jer. 7:18)
12. There will be legitimate **drink offerings** in the millennial kingdom. (Ezek. 45:16, 17)
13. The last reference in the Old Testament is found in Joel 2:14. Joel warns the Southern kingdom in 830 BC to repent and return to the Lord so that He might bless them with grain and **libations** to offer to Him.
14. Jesus spoke of His impending death on the cross as a drink offering. “*This cup which is being poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood.*” (Luke 22:20; Matt. 26:27-29)
15. The apostle Paul also spoke of his impending death as a **drink offering** being poured out. (Phil. 2:17; 2 Tim. 4:6-8)