

How Amos' Prophecies Are Springing to Life in Israel Right Now

Food, a basic need, holds the essence of who we are as people. Food and drink bring us together, define cultures, engages and inspire us across all spectrums of life. But food indeed goes far beyond our basic needs. It connects us to people, places, experiences and memories and has the power to elevate a mere morsel to a time-honored traditional family dish. Food and wine have always played an important role in the history of mankind; religious elements, celebrations and are even enjoyed for health benefits.

But have you ever thought about the spirituality of food and wine and how they relate to a life of biblical faith? In Christianity, this may be a new thought. In Judaism, there would be no Jewish faith without food and wine, as it plays a central role in the weekly and annual biblical celebrations. Food and wine are spiritual elements first rooted deep in the soil of Israel. From the time of Abraham, food and wine have played an integral role in covenants and Temple offerings. The Bible prophesies about food and wine with the foretaste of what's to come from Isa. 25:6: "The Lord of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on the mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, and refined, aged wine."

Winemaking Began in Israel

Wine is one of the oldest biblical foods, and Israel has been producing it longer than anyone. After the great flood, Noah first planted vineyards, and wine is one of the elements of Shabbat, Passover and Sukkot. Just as wine is a blessing from the Lord, it is also an expression of gratitude and joy. It's customary for people in Israel to raise a glass and say,

“L’Chaim!!” (meaning, “To Life!!”) before drinking wine.

Consider that during Passover, wine is the central element of a Jewish family Seder. The four cups enjoyed at the Seder represent the cup of sanctification to set Passover apart as a holy celebration, the cup of plagues to remember God’s judgments, the cup of blessing for Freedom from slavery and the cup of the coming Messianic kingdom (Ex. 6:6-7). There are many spiritual lessons we can learn from wine and the vineyard.

From daily nourishment to celebrating biblical holidays, food is the hub of it all. Honoring the Sabbath with bread, celebrating Passover with lamb, welcoming in the biblical New Year of Rosh HaShanah with apples and honey and celebrating Sukkot with eight days of feasting, we taste the prophetic words of Ezekiel: “But you, mountains of Israel, you will sprout your branches and bear your fruit for my people Israel, who will soon return” (Ezek. 36:8).

In Israel, we see the prophetic words of Amos: “I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel; they will rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they will plant vineyards and drink their wine, they will make gardens and eat their fruit” (Amos 9:14). God is fulfilling his promise to bring His people back to their ancient, God-given homeland with Jewish wineries and local, bustling food markets and restaurants popping up year after year. Even more proof of the role of wine in Jewish Israel, there is an Israeli winery making wine from a nearly extinct species of indigenous grapes used in biblical winemaking thousands of years ago, suggesting this may be the wine King David drank.

Seeing the Bible in Real Time

And you know, prophecy is not always mysterious. When you eat food in Israel, biblical prophecy is tangible, tasty and literally leaves you fulfilled. A food journey and visits to

ancient vineyards that have come alive again after 3,000 years is seeing the Bible in real time, face to face with words of the prophets as foretold in Scripture. Food and wine are a blessing and to see the spiritual and prophetic element of it is enriching and brings a new awareness of the depth and riches of its role in a life of worship and biblical observance.

Israel, the light to the nations, is the only place on earth where God's redemptive plan begins and ends through a specific place and a specific people but available to all of mankind. The only thing better than standing united with Israel is standing *in* Israel—a living, breathing miracle of restoration as promised in the Bible.

If you believe in miracles, then Israel is living proof that prophecy is edible and eating and drinking wine in Israel is heaven on earth. L'Chaim! {eoa}

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