



# Divine Vintage: Following the Wine Trail from Genesis to the Modern Age

*Joel Butler , Randall Heskett*

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**Winner of the Gourmand Wine Books prize for 'Best Drinks Writing Book' in the UK**

A fascinating journey through ancient wine country that reveals the drinking habits of early Christians, from Abraham to Jesus.

Wine connoisseur Joel Butler teamed up with biblical historian Randall Heskett for a remarkable adventure that travels the biblical wine trail in order to understand what kinds of wines people were drinking 2,000 to 3,500 years ago. Along the way, they discover the origins of wine, unpack the myth of Shiraz, and learn the secrets of how wine infiltrated the biblical world. This fascinating narrative is full of astounding facts that any wine lover can take to their next tasting, including the myths of the Phoenician, Greek, Roman, and Jewish wine gods, the emergence of kosher wine, as well as the use of wine in sacrifices and other rites. It will also take a close a look at contemporary modern wines made with ancient techniques, and guide the reader to experience the wines Noah (the first wine maker!) Abraham, Moses and Jesus drank.

## Divine Vintage: Following the Wine Trail from Genesis to the Modern Age Details

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Author : Joel Butler , Randall Heskett

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# **From Reader Review Divine Vintage: Following the Wine Trail from Genesis to the Modern Age for online ebook**

## **Ethan says**

A wine expert and a Biblical scholar who is a wine aficionado team up to discuss the role of wine in the Bible as well as a description of a wine tour of Bible lands.

The first section of the book analyzes wine and its place in the Bible and ancient Near Eastern and Classical culture. The second section of the book discusses modern wineries in Turkey, Greece, and the Levant, and provides a guide to wines in those regions. The book also features two sections of photos.

The authors manifestly know much about wine and bring an undeniable enthusiasm for wine and particularly for the heritage of wine and wineries in Biblical lands. Anyone who wishes to learn more about wine and wine making in the ancient world and in Biblical lands today will not be disappointed in this book.

In terms of the Biblical interpretation, however, the book leaves much to be desired. The one strength of the work is to point out the prominent place of wine in ancient culture. The fact that Noah is the first to plant a vineyard after leaving the Ark near Ararat and the fact that it seems that the first cultivation of wine happened near Ararat is interesting. The authors interpret the Biblical texts through the prism of wine and wine cultivation: on the one hand, it shows certain emphases and aspects of the texts which could otherwise be missed or ignored, but on the other hand, one could walk away from this book with serious misunderstandings about how wine and wine cultivation are used as source domains for many metaphors and believing that the whole Bible can be explained in terms of wine.

The book does well, perhaps too well, at emphasizing the role of wine in the Bible; it would have been better to have a more sober analysis. Nevertheless, there is value in this work in its specialty niche.

\*\*--book received as part of early review program

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## **Meredith says**

This book was not quite what I expected. From the description given I didn't expect it to be quite so religious in tone. The preface states that they're not treating the Bible as a history book, but throughout the first chapters they appear to do just that, or even to switch back and forth.

Aside from that, the book is just not well-written. It reads as though no one but the authors did any editing.

Much of the writing is awkward and poorly worded. Early on you find gems like this:

"...where the desire for wine would have been a newfound, even exotic, produce."

"The vine does require sufficient water to survive."

"The presence of malvidin, a compound that gives red wine its color, revealed that the wine being made was red wine."

Sometimes dates are given in reference to events, but often they're not, even when they're presenting information which leads you to believe they have specific dates in mind. When talking about the ratios of water to wine (in reference to watered wine in Rome) they don't point out which number represents wine and

which water in the first instance, but they do later on. This is really basic stuff, that any editor should have pointed out.

The second half of the book is just a tasting tour of Middle Eastern wines with a few pages about the history of modern wine making in those areas.

There is some interesting information in this book, which is the only reason I give it two stars, but the writing and inconsistencies just makes it hard to get through.

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### **DB Wright says**

#### **Great historical and modern views**

I enjoyed the first half of this book with its historical views, and connections to a biblical world. The second half of this book chronicles the travel to different wineries and list the names of modern wines that the reader honestly skimmed. This would be a great library read, for the first six chapters.

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### **Noreen Cournoyer says**

this book spends a lot of time describing modern day wines (almost half the book) and speeds through the history. quite different than i expected

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### **Jessie says**

I adore "A History of the World in 6 Glasses" by Tom Standage because he connected beverages to significance changes throughout the world so I had envisioned that Divine Vintage would be social commentary about alcohol in bible references and about global drinking social customs. However, 44% of the novel (Chapters 7 to 11) is a travel guide of wineries in various countries and the rest of information comes across as someone's A+ thesis paper. The information is presented like a college textbook and selected bible passages are given to support their opinions. The book varies between high knowledge content and then someone's personal opinion. My favorite is on page 236, "Jesus no doubt would want to enjoy red wine as well as white." As there is "no doubt" that one could know that for sure, statements like that could make the reader question the validity of facts presented in the book.

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### **Kari says**

This book reads like two college professors had too many glasses of wine one evening and decided to write a book . The first half is unnecessarily difficult to follow and is quite scattered. The second half just details all the wineries they visited while doing "research" for the book. While I can appreciate wanting to experience and see the ancient wine trail, I'm just not enough of a wine lover to care about the details associated with viticulture in the Middle East. (And that's saying a lot because I love wine!)

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## Becky Pliego says

I really wanted to love this book. The cover is beautiful, the paper and the font choices are great; the whole design is wonderful and appealing. However, I stopped reading it past half through. I just cannot trust the way a historian, who professes to be a Christian, deals with events like the flood by calling it a myth. The last sentence I read was, "The Hebrew wine god was often identified as the Israelite YHWH and appeared early in certain passages in Genesis.." (p.113)

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## Aurora says

Name of Book: Divine Vintage: Following the Wine Trail from Genesis to the Modern Age

Authors: Joel Butler, Randall Heskett

ISBN: 978-0-230-11243-8

Publisher: Palgrave Macmillan

Year it was published: 2012

Summary:

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Opinion:

First of all, love the cover, the font and the pictures of grapes throughout the pages. Unfortunately, judging from first chapter alone, the history isn't alive nor well-written and it may sound odd, but I didn't appreciate the bible stories and how repetitious they were throughout the first chapter, and how some things such as a hypothesis is considered evidence to make something plausible? Perhaps more of a background on the monkey study would have convinced me of how truthful it is.

Verdict:

I don't think I'll continue to read this book.

This is a Firstreads Goodreads Win

2 out of 5

(0: Stay away unless a masochist 1: Good for insomnia 2: Horrible but readable; 3: Readable and quickly forgettable, 4: Good, enjoyable 5: Buy it, keep it and never let it go.)

<http://sveta-randomblog.blogspot.com/...>

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### **Kenneth says**

This book had a lot of potential. I gave it five stars early on, because it was very informative and well written. However, I have serious problems with much of the biblical exposition and wonder how much was actually written by the Biblical Scholar on the dust jacket, because if he wrote it, he really needs to update his information. Also, some of the exposition twisted the meaning of the stories far out of any recognition. For example, he uses the Jesus' story of the property owner who planted a vineyard and rented it out to tenants to tend it then sent messengers to collect the rent (even resorting to sending his own son) as an example of oppression and lenders foreclosing on small land owners (p 104). In actuality this story is a reminder of the Old Testament description of Israel as a vineyard in Isaiah 5. Jesus is saying Israel was the Lord's vineyard and the leaders who were supposed to provide him a harvest not only refused, but killed those sent to remind them of their duty. It is a story of a wayward people, calling up a recollection from their own scriptures. It is not a socio-economic commentary of Marxist class struggle.

I gave it three stars early on, but considered dropping the rating. However, I chose to keep it at three stars because it did what I purchased it for. I did not look to this book for good exposition, but a good historical source on wine and alcohol in the ancient world, and especially its connection to religious expression. The book did this well. So I guess you could say the wine expert made up for the short-comings of the biblical scholarship.

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### **Tracy Allen says**

Fantastic example of cultural anthropology. Very interesting and well done.

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### **Kelli Lynn Dwyer says**

As soon as I saw the book on the giveaway list I knew I just had to read this, so I'm very happy to have won. As soon as I receive and have a chance to read this I will be more than happy to write a review! Thanks.

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### **Alice Verberne says**

This this book is not what I expected. I did not read all of the reference notes on the vineyards, but would

take that info with me if I decided to travel to the area to buy wine. It melds the ancient history of wine through archeological findings and biblical reference with travel to the ancient areas where (near the old sites), new wineries are located. Although much of the book seems to be written from a personal opinion when it comes to biblical interpretation, I found the text thought provoking and may come off as offensive to some readers. If you are interested in wine, history, religion and travel, then this book will provide erudite details to help you gain a deeper appreciation for the fruit of the vine. Part vineyard review, part history book, part personal opinion, I found it an interesting perspective but somewhat difficult to maintain my interest. It is also a very good go-to reference book that is directly helpful for anyone visiting Turkey or the near East in search of "new" wines from ancient locations where many vintners are attempting to recreate historic wine making practices to get as close as they may to what the ancients enjoyed.

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### **Margaret Sankey says**

Interesting food history from a Hebrew scholar and a wine importer, tracking the appearance of wine as an element of religious ritual in the Near East, with supporting evidence from archaeology of it's trajectory as an agricultural and economic factor in these civilization.

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