



Grapes, Wine and Kilei Hakerem #1

The prohibition of *kilei hakerem* (intercropping with grapevines) is different from the injunctions against *kilei zera'im* (interplanting with seeds) and *kilei ilan* (grafting). Even if one were to plant vegetable seeds together or graft fruits or vegetables in a forbidden manner, the produce is still permitted for consumption. Not so with *kilei hakerem*: if one interplants in a vineyard, it is prohibited to eat or benefit from the produce grown alongside the vineyard (also called cover crops), and the vine must also be destroyed, as it states:

"פֶּן יִתְקַדֵּשׁ הַמְּלֵאָה הַזֶּרַע אֲשֶׁר תִּזְרַע וּתְבוֹאֵת הַכֶּרֶם"

"... else the crop—from the seed you have sown—and the yield of the vineyard may not be used" (Deut. 22:9).

In the past few generations, since the beginning of the Jews' return to the Land of Israel, and especially now, there are many vineyards for both table grapes and wine grapes growing all over Israel. These vineyards can be found from the

tip of the Golan Heights, through the Upper Galilee, and all the way down to the Arava and Mitzpe Ramon in the Negev. Grape harvesting season for table grapes starts in the early spring in the Arava and Jordan Bank, and ends in *Shevat* for the high quality vineyards in the Lakhish region. Such a long season would never have been possible a decade ago, and certainly not two generations ago. Elongating the harvest season is made possible thanks to smart combinations of different cultivars and to the exploitation of the extremely varied climate conditions all over the Land of Israel, a country not lacking for anything: "ארץ אשר...לא תחסר כל בה" (Deut. 8:7). There is no match anywhere on the globe for such a long harvesting season for table grapes in such a small stretch of land. Of course we must give credit to the amazing farmers who, with their hard work and with Divine assistance, achieve extraordinary results. From a financial perspective table grapes are branded in the marketplace as a high quality crop, so they can be sold expensively throughout the marketing seasons. ■

רפואה שלמה
טובה אסתר בת לאה מרים
לאה נעמי בת טובה
צילה בת מרים