

ALCOHOL AND THE SCRIPTURES

ALCOHOL AND THE SCRIPTURES

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with introduction by the
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Foreword

To the Second Edition.

The First Edition of “Alcohol and the Scriptures” published June, 1966, was sold out in about eight months. That seemed to indicate an awareness in the community on the problems arising out of the increasing use of alcoholic beverages, and a genuine interest in finding an ethical basis from which to view those problems.

The First Edition was written at a request of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria, that the Temperance committee examine the references in the Old and New Testaments made to wine and strong drink, and make an assessment of the attitude of the Scriptures from these references.

In this Second Edition I have added some introductory paragraphs on the background, nature and effects of alcohol which seemed to be necessary to a better understanding of the subject.

Two to three thousand years ago, in the ancient world, although the problems created by alcohol were quite evident, they could not have reached anything like the same proportions or seriousness that obtains in our modern, mechanized world. Nor was alcohol the subject for medical, scientific or social research until very many centuries after the last book in the Bible was written.

The question then arises, has the study of alcohol, as it is referred to in the Scriptures, any relevance for us today? Does the Bible have a challenge for us in this matter, here and now? If so, what is it?

It is my hope that this second enlarged and revised edition may provide, if not an answer, at least a stimulation to thought on a subject urgently demanding thought.

My thanks are due to Dr. K. M. Bowden, Lecturer in Forensic Medicine, University of Melbourne, who has kindly read Part 1, and made helpful suggestions, and to the Revelation A. T. STEVENS, BA, BD, Diploma RE, who has written the Introduction.

Edith A. Kerr

Introduction

The practice of social drinking has become such a widespread habit in society, that the total abstainer almost finds himself in the position of a heretic! He is even likened to a fussy old lady who says, “No, you mustn’t”, and he is urged to promote moderation and self-control instead.

This advice, however, is fraught with practical difficulties. How is moderation defined? The term is purely relative. Some who are “moderate” in their own estimation, would appeal others to be heavy drinkers. Also, since at least one drinker in twenty has alcoholic tendencies, it would be impossible for a large number of people ever to drink in moderation.

Actually, the philosophy “moderation in all things” has very little in common with Christian ethics. The Christian is instructed to regard his body as the temple of the Holy Spirit, and is exhorted to abstain from anything that would be injurious to it. Moreover, he is required so to order his conduct, that he will never, by his example, place a stumbling-block in the path of the “weaker brother”. These considerations constitute strong and compelling arguments in favor of total abstinence.

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Miss E. A. Kerr has made a scholarly examination of the instances of alcohol in the Scriptures, and concludes that voluntary total abstinence is the duty of a Christian. There will be those who will be at issue with her arguments; it is for them to produce something equally scholarly to support their contentions.

This second edition has been produced in the hope that it will be of assistance to those who are perplexed by the whole alcohol question. If so, the writer will be amply repaid.

A. T. Stevens

1. The Problem of Alcohol is an Ancient One

There is no matter of greater concern in our world today, whether it be to health, industry, state or church, national or family life, than that of alcohol and its effects.

The knowledge that scientific research, history and human observation reveals clearly is that it is a problem which must be undertaken from many different approaches. No one attitude or objective field of service can operate independently with complete success.

The curative aspect calls for the doctor, the counselor and the minister; the rehabilitate for that of the psychiatrist, and the social worker, for the understanding and help of the Alcoholics Anonymous group and of the church, and for a co-operative program in industry aimed at the recovery of skilled workers from the “disease” of alcoholism.

There is also an urgent need for basic preventive education of adults and teenagers, of parents and children; for objective scientific education on the nature and effects of alcohol to be taught in schools and colleges, and to social workers, church leaders and ministers, and members of government.

In short, to meet the problem effectively, the awareness and active participation of all responsible citizens is needed.

It is not a new problem: References to alcohol and its potent influence can be clearly traced through the centuries from the earliest surviving records, both secular and sacred. That alcoholism was known in Egypt as far back as 3000 BC is suggested by records found by archaeologists there. They pay tribute to certain people who made it their business to restore to health those who were “sick from wine and beer”. [1]

Herodotus, the “Father of history”, records that about 2000 BC it was the custom at feasts given by the Pharaoh to put a skeleton on the table to remind guests of the danger of imbibing too freely.

The sacred writings of India and Persia are also said to give incisive observations on the changes of behavior that occur during intoxication.

Certain sections of the Book of Proverbs are held to show the influence of the Egyptian philosopher, Amenophes, dated about 1000 BC. In the 23rd chapter, verses 20, 21 and 29-33 a very accurate description of an alcoholic is given, ending in the words, “At the last it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder.”

The first mention in the Old Testament of alcoholic beverages occurs in the Book of Genesis where Noah, we are told, planted a vineyard and drank of the wine and was drunken (9:21). The writer had offered his explanation, in an earlier chapter (4:21, 22), of the origin of institutions and inventions. Here he returns to his theories of beginnings, and sees in the forsaking, by the Hebrews, of their former nomadic way of life for that of settlement and cultivation of the soil, the curse laid on Canaan, the son of Ham. That is, he attributes the corruption he sees creeping into the life and religion of Israel to the settling down of the Hebrews among the Canaanites and so coming under the influence of their nature-cults and drunken orgies.

The abstinence of the Rechabites is considered a survival of this former nomadism. It was a life without vineyards and therefore without the curse of liquor. The vine stood for the culture of Canaan which was associated with false worship. Because it threatened the simplicity and purity of Israel’s life and faith, it was a point of honor with the Rechabites to abjure the vine and its fruits in any form. (Jeremiah 35:1-11.)

Another class of abstainers in the early history of Israel was that of the Nazarites who in the interests of holiness devoted themselves to Yahweh by a special vow for definite periods. So, in Numbers 6 we read, “He shall separate himself from Wine and strong drink . . . neither drink any liquor of grapes, nor eat fresh grapes or dried”. (6:3). Originally the vow was a life-long one. Young and enthusiastic men were moved by the Spirit of God to make it and it was an offence against God to tempt them to break it: “But you gave the Nazarites wine to drink.” (Amos 2:11.) We are told that Samson was a “Nazarite unto God from the womb unto the day of his death” (Judges 13:7).

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There is not very much evidence of excess in drinking, in the Old Testament, until after the time of David. The prosperity of the reign of Solomon promoted more luxurious living and the common acceptance of intoxicating beverages. We are told in 1 Kings 16:9 that Zimri smote Elah, King of Israel, who was “drinking himself drunk”, and later in Chapter 20, v. 16, that Ben-hadad of Syria “was drinking himself drunk”. Alcoholism was already established.

At the same time came stern warnings from the true Prophets, both to individuals and to the nation against the new drinking customs. “Woe to them,” cried Amos, “that drink wine in bowls.”

It was not until the time of Amos and Hosea that abstention was based on ethical grounds. “Woe unto him that gives his neighbor drink and makes him drunken”, Habakkuk 2:15. (Also, Amos 4:1, 6:6; Jeremiah 51:7; Isaiah 5:11, 22.) It was the Prophets of that period who first emphasized the vital connection between morality and religion. After the Captivity intoxicating liquors do not seem to have been used so frequently. The name “Nazirite” does not appear in the Scriptures, but their influence remained. Verse 24 in Chapter 21 of the Acts would suggest that the “vow” was that of the Nazarites. Josephus records that when Agrippa came to Rome “he ordered that many of the Nazarites should have their heads shaven” (Antiquities 19:6-1). It is possible that John the Baptist was also a Nazirite for he was to “drink no wine nor strong drink” (Luke 1:15).

There are numerous references regarding the making and use of alcoholic liquors in works other than the Old Testament, still extant, of the early Greek and Roman writers.

In Athens and Sparta, about 500 BC, a decree was made that any State official found intoxicated should be subject to a fine for the first offence and be put to death should he repeat it.

In the first century of the Christian era the historian, Pliny, wrote, “If anyone will take the trouble to consider the matter, he will find that on no other subject is the industry of man kept more constantly on the alert than upon the making of wine.”

Arnold Toynbee, in “Civilization on Trial”, points out the possible racial damage wrought by alcohol in the disintegration of nineteen of the great civilizations of the past.

“There is nothing to prevent our (i.e., Western) civilization from following historical precedent, if it chooses, by committing social suicide, but we are not doomed to make history repeat itself. We are not just at the mercy of inescapable fate.”

Dr. E. M. Jellinek sums up the situation in these words, “We will conquer the problems of alcohol or they will conquer us”. [2]

We need to look at the question, “What is alcohol: what its effects?” Why, when mighty Empires have succumbed to its power, has it been allowed to continue its potent sway through the centuries?

WHAT IS ALCOHOL?

The word alcohol is probably derived from the Arabic “al kohl” meaning a fine powder, probably antimony sulfide, used then in making cosmetics. In time it came to mean the essence of something. Still, much later, in the 16th century AD, an early chemist, Paracelsus, defined it as the most subtle part of anything” and in this sense spoke of it as “alcohol-vini”. Gradually the “vini” was dropped but it was not until the 19th century that the term “alcohol” came to be used generally for wine-spirits”.

Now, in chemistry, the word alcohol denotes a branch of the hydro-carbon family. It is a group of liquids containing the elements carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. There are 59 varieties of alcohol, the most important for our consideration being ethyl alcohol, fruit or grain spirit.

Alcoholic beverages contain ethyl alcohol only, of which the chemical formula is C_2H_5OH . Pure alcohol is a colorless fluid: it boils at 173 F and freezes solid at 200 F below zero. Absolute alcohol, 99% ethyl alcohol, is used in scientific and laboratory procedures. Methylated spirits is ethyl alcohol to which 5% of methyl alcohol has been added to make it unpalatable. Both ethyl and methyl alcohol are highly toxic. Ethyl alcohol taken in excess can cause acute alcoholic poisoning which may be fatal.

PRODUCTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Alcoholic beverages fall into three main categories according to the manner of their manufacture and the percentage of alcohol in them.

1. The brewed beverages are made from grain such as barley, oats, maize. They include ale, beer, porter and stout. They are made by the conversion of starch in the cereals into sugar by the action of

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enzymes and the subsequent fermentation of the sugar. The conversion of the starch is effected by malt, which is usually sprouted barley. The enzyme formed during the sprouting converts the starch into sugar and then yeast is added which converts some of the sugar into alcohol.

2. Wines are made from fruits, usually grapes, by the direct fermentation of the sugar in the fruit juice.

3. Distilled spirits include whisky, gin, rum, brandy, vodka. They are produced by fractional distillation of wines or brewed beverages to concentrate the alcohol in the distillate.

The active agent in fermentation is yeast which is a microscopically small plant usually present in the air or in dust. It produces an enzyme which is capable of breaking down sugars and finally converting the sugars into alcohol and carbon dioxide.

Wine of a sort could be made, as it was in antiquity, by simply exposing the fruit juice to the air in a warm place, but in commercial manufacture of wine carefully cultured yeast is added. Fermentation continues until the sugar has been turned into alcohol and the concentration of the alcohol has risen up to 10 or 12 per cent. When that strength is reached the alcohol kills the yeast which produced the ferment.

In natural wines the alcohol content ranges between 4 and 12 per cent. Fortified wines are made by the addition of distilled spirits, usually brandy.

Distillation. Natural wines and brewed beverages were the only alcoholic drinks until a few centuries ago. In antiquity, as far back as 800 BC, they seem to have had crude methods of distilling alcohol from rice, millet and mare's milk. However, the process of distillation leading to modern methods was first developed and applied in Italy about AD 1000. Spain followed two centuries later and France in the next century. In the sixteenth century Scotland founded her trade in whisky by distillation of alcohol from barley.

When a liquid containing alcohol is heated above 173 F, the alcohol vaporizes and can be separated out of the steam which rises. When the steam is condensed, the fluid – the distilled spirit - has a higher concentration of alcohol. This concentrated spirit is then used to increase the alcoholic content of other alcoholic beverages. Distillation was first applied to wine to make brandy and to beer to make whisky. In turn, brandy is added to wines to fortify them", e.g., sherry may be fortified to have an alcoholic content of 22 per cent.

Medical science defines ethyl alcohol as "One of the group of drugs classed as narcotics, whose dominant action is a depression of function of all forms of living tissue". (Haven Emerson, M.D., Columbia University, U.S.A.) "Alcohol, from the pharmacological view point, is an anaesthetic and a narcotic, potentially a habit-forming, craving-creating addiction-drug." (Andrew C. Ivy, M.D., Vice-President, University Illinois, U.S.A.)

EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL ON THE BODY

What does alcohol do when taken into the body?

Ethyl alcohol undergoes no digestion in the stomach. Portion of the ingested alcohol is absorbed through the mucous membrane of the stomach and the remainder through the wall of the small intestine. It is taken into the blood to all the tissue of the body. Its effect on the brain is made apparent by the altered behavior of the drinker.

On the brain it acts as an anaesthetic, depressing first the higher cerebral functions such as will power, reason, judgment, moral and social restraint; faculties which differentiate man from the animals. Because of this action ethyl alcohol is classed scientifically as a depressant of the central nervous system. It is not a true stimulant. The apparent feeling of stimulation, or the excitement that occurs after taking alcoholic drink, is due to the removal of the inhibitory control mechanism or the dampening down of this function of the cerebral cortex.

If more alcohol is taken, other cerebral functions are affected - physical skills, technical ability, etc. Widespread tests show that the judgment of many motorists with low levels of alcohol in the blood is affected. While thinking they are driving well the contrary is the case. Tests with skilled typists, given small amounts of alcohol, showed no effect on speed but the mistakes made increased in number perceptibly. One of the early and significant effects of alcohol is to slow down the reflexes. With increasing concentrations in the blood stream the cranial nerves may be affected - as evidenced by blurred or double vision.

Even small amounts of alcohol may affect the whole nervous system; larger amounts taken over a

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period of time can cause permanent brain damage. The cerebrum and the cerebellum will show the effects of alcohol before the brain stem, or the medulla, where vital centers such as those controlling the heart beat, and breathing, are situated. As the concentration of alcohol in the blood stream rises it may reach a level sufficiently high to paralyze the breathing center and cause death.

In general, food in the stomach delays the absorption of alcohol which is usually rapid during the first hour, especially on an empty stomach. The maximum concentration in the blood is reached from within half an hour to two hours after drinking, depending on food intake, the strength of the drink taken, and the habits of the drinker.

What the body does with alcohol.

When alcohol is absorbed from the gastro-intestinal tract it passes into the general circulation via the liver, the right side of the heart, the lungs and the left side of the heart, and is carried to all the tissues of the body. The alcohol is eliminated from the body chiefly by oxidation. This is a fundamental body process by which all food substances such as sugars and fats, liberate their chemical energy in the form of heat and work. Oxidation is effected in the various organs of the body by enzyme systems. Excess sugar or fat is stored in the body to be liberated and used when necessary. Oxidation of alcohol is effected by combination with oxygen brought by the blood stream from the lungs. Ultimately alcohol is converted to carbon dioxide and water by the oxidative process. Unlike sugars and fats excess alcohol cannot be stored in the body but continues to circulate until oxidation and elimination are complete.

Elimination from the body takes place at fairly even rate, about 10-20 milligrams each hour, or at least two hours for the alcohol in a bottle of beer.

A man of average build who drinks the equivalent of eight ounces of whisky, containing 4 ounces of alcohol, on an empty stomach, would not be free from alcohol in his blood for twelve hours, providing he drank no more in the interim. Each extra ounce of alcohol drunk during that twelve hours would add three further hours to the elimination time.

In addition to oxidation, a small amount of alcohol is lost from the body, unchanged, by the kidneys, through the lungs, and in other body secretions. The total amount lost by these means is small, varying from 1-2 per cent to as much as 10-15 per cent. [3] The amount of alcohol lost in the lungs is the basis of the breath test, an indirect test by the breathalyzer for the amount circulating in the blood stream.

Effects on other parts of the body

When absorbed, alcohol has a wide distribution in the body with its action on the central nervous system predominating clinically. It irritates mucous membranes, particularly that of the stomach. It has been estimated that about one-third of drinkers suffer from chronic inflammation of the stomach. [4] The action on the heart is that of a muscle poison, the muscle fibers swell and the heart action is weakened.

Cirrhosis of the liver is a disease particularly associated with heavy or constant drinking. According to Dr. A. Senseman, cirrhosis occurs eight times as frequently in drinkers as in total abstainers. [5] Dr. Jellinek's formula for determining the incidence of alcoholism is based on this statistical fact. It is calculated from the known number of deaths due to cirrhosis of the liver in any country. This disease may occur also among moderate drinkers as a result of vitamin deficiency. Excessive drinking, especially if there is distaste for food, robs the body of essential foodstuffs-proteins, vitamins, minerals, etc. A deficiency of essential food requirements can add a whole galaxy of symptoms to those due to the toxic effects of alcohol.

With the flushing of the skin capillaries and heat loss, shock and the effects of extreme cold are enhanced. Resistance to infection may be lowered.

Alcohol was formerly used as a stimulant, and medicinally in the treatment of asthma, heart disease, diseases of blood vessels, and other conditions. After hundreds of experiments at Johns Hopkins University General Hospital, and at the Mayo Clinic, in the United States of America, it was concluded that alcohol was not beneficial in these conditions. Today other effective remedies are readily available. Alcohol has no real curative value in the treatment of disease.

Alcohol as a food.

The definition of a food as given by Horsely and Struge is, "any substance which when absorbed into the blood stream will nourish, repair waste, and furnish heat and energy to the body without causing injury to any of its parts or loss of functional activity".

The only claim that alcohol has to being a food is that it can provide calories when oxidized and it

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is used sometimes in medicine for that reason. Although providing calories, alcohol is grossly inadequate in essential food substances.

The essential difference between the use of alcohol for its caloric value, and other foods, needs to be appreciated. About 200 calories are provided on oxidation per ounce of alcohol. With carbohydrates and fats, what the body does not immediately need for energy requirements, is stored for further use. With alcohol none is stored; it must be oxidized or eliminated. The average man requires about 2,500 calories basically each day so that a pint of whisky would serve about two-thirds of that need. But alcohol contains no protein, no minerals, and no vitamins, etc., which are all essential for health and well being. Apart therefore from the calories it liberates on oxidation, few if any would seriously regard alcohol as a food.

THE PROBLEM OF ALCOHOLISM IN THE LIGHT OF THE SCRIPTURES

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me ... he has sent me to heal the broken-hearted.... to set at liberty them that are captive.. .” (Isaiah 61:1).

Any statement, however brief, on the effects of alcohol must include a reference to the “disease” of alcoholism which is recognized as a world-health problem of major proportions.

It is a state in which craving for alcohol makes it impossible to stop drinking and in which continuation seems the only resource.

In Australia with a population of twelve millions, on a conservative estimate there are about 200,000 alcoholics. There are twice that number of heavy drinkers (pre-alcoholics) and four times the number of family members involved in the web of suffering.

Dr. Haven Emerson says of alcoholism, “It is the most destructive, preventable disease; a self-chosen poisoning, sanctioned by society.”

Whether we allow it as a “disease” or not, it is certainly the cause of many sicknesses. But, if a disease, why is it not treated as such? If it were stated that 200,000 people in Australia were suffering from any other recognized disease, a public hue and cry would be raised, not only for treatment, but for eradication and prevention. The efficient cause in every case of alcoholism is known to be alcohol but the issue is avoided. It is self-evident that the one factor without which the disease could not exist is alcohol. If there were no alcohol there could be no alcoholics!

Among all advanced peoples grave illnesses such as typhus, tuberculosis etc., have been practically eliminated by modern medicines and strict procedures for prevention. Alcoholism claims more victims than cancer and tuberculosis but while it is the subject of research for scientists, psychiatrists and medical specialists, it is only in the field of treatment and rehabilitation they are working.

No national program for prevention and eradication has ever been put forward. On the contrary, the “disease” is encouraged by all known media of propaganda and by social pressure, that bears heavily on adults, and practically forces our young people to acquire drinking habits which will lead to one in every nine or ten becoming an alcoholic, with all the misery that entails.

The attitude of the community is decidedly ambivalent both asking for and rejecting frank and full analysis of the problem and the solution thereof.

We have seen that alcoholism has a long history existing when written records were first made. As soon as man discovered that fermentation turned sugary fruit juices into a drink of different nature and potent effect, there were those who became captive to its addictive properties.

In the annals of the Old Testament, not drinking but drunkenness, with all its accompaniments and consequences was abhorred. They knew by experience that fermented beverages were intoxicating and narcotic in their effect. A paraphrase of Proverbs 31:4-7 could read, “Intoxicating liquors are not for such as Kings and Princes who think and act for others: give them to those who wish to lose the power of acting and thinking for themselves.”

Centuries later Shakespeare saw the same problem, “O, that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains.” [6]

The Prophets with their strong ethical emphasis were alive to the dangers and denounce the sin of drunkenness unequivocally.

“Wine,” says Habakkuk, “Is a treacherous dealer . . . that keeps not at home; that enlarges his desire as hell, and he is as death, and cannot be satisfied, but gathers unto him all peoples” (2:5). “Woe to him that gives his neighbor drink ... and makes him drunk” (v. 15).

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In the New Testament the situation is much the same. Our Lord did not give explicit rules for conduct, but he gave us ethical principles and parables for us to think out and apply for ourselves;

“Woe unto the world because of offences ... woe to the man by whom the offence comes” (Matthew 8:7).

“It is not your Father’s will that one of these little ones should be lost.” (Matthew 18:14).

There is no absolute prohibition but the dangers of drinking are clearly recognized, as we shall see in more detail later, and inebriety strongly condemned in all the Epistles.

But Alcoholism in the 20th century presents a very different problem. We have ample medical and scientific evidence of the effect of the drug alcohol upon the human organism which was completely undreamed of in the pre-scientific era. Alcoholic beverages are now very different also. Spirituous liquors and fortified wines have a much higher alcoholic content than the natural wines and beers of earlier times; hence they have greater addictive and narcotic potency.

Christ left his unfinished task to his continuing Church to carry on to heal the broken-hearted ... to set at liberty them that are bound: certainly that fits the alcoholic!

The Christian cannot pass by on the other side and leave the alcoholic entirely to the medical Good Samaritan. He is in need of specialized care, but he needs more than that. At the root of his trouble lies a haunting sense of guilt, of estrangement from his loved ones and friends; a sense of failure as a person lacking in self-control and in duty to family, job and community.

He can never be recovered until he acknowledges his inability to overcome his problem in his own strength. He needs understanding and fellowship - most of all he needs God. Faith in a living God has accounted for more recoveries from alcoholism than all the other therapeutic agencies put together.

The success of Alcoholics Anonymous lies largely in the fact they know this. Many recovered alcoholics have come to put the Alcoholics Anonymous in the place of the church - a tragic fact which should offer a challenge to all practicing Christians.

We all share in the guilt felt by the alcoholic in that we allow the kind of world which is responsible for alcoholism and its attendant evils. The contention that the preaching of voluntary abstinence is opposed to the concept of Christian freedom as proclaimed in the New Testament can not be upheld when confronted with the spirit of the teaching of Jesus Christ. The Christian is free, because he is no longer the bond-servant of sin. [7]

Mr. H. C. Heath speaking in Manchester in 1965 said, “The vision of the nation is being blurred by pseudo-scientific and misleading talk about the so-called disease of alcoholism. . . . The common-sense and certain method of immunity is being enveloped in a smoke-screen of clinical origin. Alongside the vested interests of the liquor trade there is growing up a vested interest in alcoholism itself. Institutions are being established and manned, not by persons wishing to see an end of the drink traffic and habit, but by those prepared to engage in an oblique perpetuation of the evil by urging that its worst effects can be mitigated by clinical treatment”. [8]

“Which is neighbor” to the man in deep distress, brought the reply, “The man who showed mercy”. And the response of Jesus was, “Go thou and do likewise”.

The simple decision of a Christian to settle the question of whether he is strong enough to remain a moderate drinker is not an adequate criterion while alcohol goes on wrecking homes, turning talented men and women into useless derelicts, filling jails and hospitals and mental hospitals with its victims. Our concern as Christians must be to extend the helping hand to others, weaker than ourselves, to live fully and creatively as we were intended, in the image of God.

To be reclaimed an alcoholic must become a total abstainer. The Church has a moral responsibility to provide an atmosphere in which such persons can find God and freedom from temptation.

“It is a fine thing to abstain from eating meat or drinking wine, or doing anything which causes your brother’s downfall.” (Romans 14:21).

2. Alcohol and the Scriptures

Throughout the books of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, references to wine and strong drink occur frequently, sometimes in terms of appreciation, sometimes of strong condemnation.

Thus in Isaiah we read, “As the new wine is found in the cluster ... destroy it not for a blessing is in it.” (65:8). But in an earlier chapter we find a solemn warning against it, “Woe unto them that rise up

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early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that tarry late into the night, till wine inflame them” (5:11).

This is confusing to those who would seek guidance from the Scriptures on the question of temperance or abstinence from alcoholic beverages.

Why is this so? What should be the Christian stand?

Today, when medical science has declared alcohol to be one of the major health hazards. When it is recognized as a main contributing factor in the alarming toll of road and industrial accidents. When absenteeism and sickness through alcoholism are causing an economic problem of considerable proportions. When society is faced with the disturbing knowledge of so many broken homes, unwanted children, delinquency and crime - very often attributable, in the first instance, to the use of alcohol - can the Christian stand aside and say, “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

Does the Bible help? It is of course not legitimate to turn to the Bible expecting to find specific rules and regulations for our conduct, but we may fairly expect to find principles relevant for our guidance there.

Our Lord laid down one principle of paramount importance when He said, “Seek you first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things will be added unto you”, that is, things would fall into their right perspectives and our duty be made clear to us. Was it the same principle expressed in other words when He declared the whole religious and moral code was embodied in the words, “Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and
“Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself”.

The glorious liberty of the “sons of God” brought by Christ was to be a freedom to live, not as one chooses, but as one ought. For those who are “in Christ” the very spring of action is the love of Christ, and consideration for others must claim the highest priority. (2 Corinthians 5:14)

A liberty which denies one’s obligations to one’s fellowmen can easily degenerate into selfishness and license.

The place of Alcohol in the Scriptures of the Old Testament.

The very frequency with which wine, the vine and vineyards are mentioned, shows that it was recognized as a subject of considerable importance in the pre-Christian era in Palestine. Here we must remember that the Old Testament is not one book, but a library compiled over many centuries when the civilization of the Hebrew people was developing from nomadic to agrarian and their customs and attitudes correspondingly changing with the years. Our English Bible represents the translation of these books from the Hebrew.

An examination of the Hebrew text reveals that the one English word “wine”, is used to translate some dozen Hebrew and Aramaic words of varying significance. Wine may indicate the fruit of the vine as grapes, raisins or cakes of raisins, liquids thick or thin or boiled, beverages alcoholic or non-alcoholic, wines sour, sweet or as vinegar.

So, when we read the passages mentioned above, we find the word for “new wine” (Isaiah 65:8) is tirosh, while “strong drink” is shekar and for “wine” is yayin (Isaiah 5:11).

No Biblical reference to “wine” then, in the English versions, can be interpreted correctly without taking into account the particular Hebrew word used, the context, the people concerned and the period of reference. Even then a clear cut decision as to the exact meaning and appropriate rendering is not always possible.

Moreover, it is important to note that no true comparison of modern alcoholic beverages can be made with those of ancient times as distillation of alcohol from wine etc., only began about AD 1000. It gradually began to be used as liquor, while fortification of wines, with pure spirit, to increase the alcoholic content, was not practiced before the 18th century. As already stated, natural fermentation never exceeds 14 per cent. [9] But modern alcoholic beverages may contain up to 50 per cent of alcohol.

There is no particular word in the Hebrew which always stands for fermented wine nor is there any word which can be held to always indicate God’s approval, either implicit or explicit. But where it is called a “blessing” nothing occurs in the context to indicate alcoholic quality; indeed quite the reverse. The word yayin occurs in the sense of blessing only twice and is associated with the other produce of the fields, corn and olives, while tirosh in this sense is used eleven times, e.g., Jeremiah 31:12, and is associated with food some thirty times. (Refer to Appendix.)

Drunkenness with all its consequences is always held in abhorrence in the Old Testament, “Wine

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is a mocker, strong drink a brawler” (Proverbs 20:1). [10] Divine displeasure is frequently associated with intoxicating drink and its results, and denounced in no uncertain terms by the prophets—“But these have erred through wine . . . are gone astray they err in vision and stumble in judgment.” (Isaiah 28:7, 8). [11]

Canaan was an agricultural country having as its chief products corn, olives and grapes. These were often taken to denote temporal good gifts of all sorts and, further, as types of spiritual blessings bestowed by God. The vine was regarded, perhaps, as God’s choicest gift to man, hence the frequent references to the vine and its fruits, while Israel itself is often taken as a symbol of God’s vineyard: “For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel and the men of Judah his pleasant plants” (Isaiah 5:7). Hence it is not surprising that we find the symbolism of the vine entwined in many of the most beloved and spiritual passages of both the Old and the New Testaments.

“I am the true vine, you are the branches” is a deeply satisfying allegory to those whose lives are “hid in Christ.”

It is sometimes claimed as a corollary that wine must then be regarded as one of God’s good gifts to men. But while it is true that God gave the vine and its luscious fruit for the use of men, it was man not God who took the health-giving juice of the grapes and made of it a beverage, deficient in nutrients but potent in its effects on both mind and body: “For the imagination of man’s heart was evil from his youth.” (Genesis 8:21).

Hebrew words denoting the vine and its produce.

The words of most frequent occurrence are those already mentioned, Yayin, Shekar and Tirosh. Yayin is used at least 140 times. It is regarded as a generic term for the juice of the grape expressed in various ways. Occasionally it seems to be regarded as a blessing, sometimes as a curse, but mostly the attitude to yayin seems to be a neutral one. The first mention of yayin is in connection with the sin of Noah (Genesis 9:21). It is not included among the offerings of Abel although the existence of many vineyards early in Canaan is suggested by the exaggerated language of Jacob’s blessing: “He hath washed his garments in wine, and his vesture in the blood of grapes”. (Genesis 49:11).

The words Yayin and Shekar translated wine and strong drink, occur together a number of times always indicating intoxicating beverages. The Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint (LXX), translates the words oinos and sikera. Shekar is used 23 times in the Old Testament but only once in the New Testament, “He shall drink no wine nor strong drink” (Luke 1:15).

It seems probable that originally shekar (strong drink) differed from yayin (wine) in that it was made from the fermented juice of the date, but later was used to designate any fermented liquor.

The Tell-Armana letters, discovered in 1887, but dated about 1380 BC, indicate that barley, honey or other fruits were used for strong drink. According to the Encyclopaedia Biblica the etymology of “shekar” warrants the inference that it designated every sort of intoxicating beverage from whatever source derived.

The use of wine and strong drink was forbidden to the priests while on sacred duty in the Tabernacle: “Drink no wine or strong drink . . . when you go into the tent of meeting . . . it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations. And that you may put difference between the holy and the common, and between the clean and the unclean.” (Leviticus 10:9, 10; Cf. Ezekiel 44:21.)

That the priests however did not always obey this stricture but succumbed to the influence of the addictive drug is evidenced by the prophet Isaiah, “The priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are gone astray through strong drink . . .” (28:7, 8).

We who live in the freedom of the New Covenant believe that Jesus Christ has purchased by His blood “men of every tribe and language, people and nations . . . to serve our God as priests” (Revelation 5:9, 10). The priesthood of all believers includes every Christian in a service not limited to particular times and seasons. It means a complete dedication of the whole life so that there is no time when we may put a difference between the holy and the common, the clean and the unclean. The Christian has a full time assignment; he is always on duty; his temple is what Thomas a’ Kempis calls a “private chapel of the soul”. All life is God’s and comes from Him; therefore there can not be separate compartments for the secular and the sacred; “Do you not know that your body is a shrine of the indwelling Holy Spirit?” (1 Corinthians 6:19).

It is significant that Ezekiel, in his ideal sketch of the reformed and sanctified Temple, filled with the “glory of the Lord” makes no provision for an offering of wine although this had formerly had a recognized place as a libation in the ritual. (12)

The third Hebrew word in frequent use for wine is “tirosh”; sometimes translated in the Authorized

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Version as a “wine”, sometimes “new wine”. In the Revised Version and in the New English Bible it is always rendered as “new wine”. In the Septuagint (LXX) it is translated as “glukos” of which the English form today is glucose, a dextrose or grape-sugar. It is used once only in the New Testament where in the Greek it is “gleukos” and in the English translations “new wine”. (Acts 2:13).

In the Old Testament “tirosh” is used some 37 times, translated by the Authorized Version “wine” 29 times, “new wine” 5 times and vintage 3 times; always, as noted, in the Revised Versions as “new wine”. In all instances it is described as a blessing from God with one doubtful exception. [13] In this controversial passage in Hosea 4:11 we read, “Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the understanding” (or “captivate the heart”). Here the two words “yavin” and “tirosh” both appear. ,

Strictly speaking, the word “tirosh” indicates the freshly expressed juice of the grape. [14] In this sense it is frequently named as a product of the soil and grouped with oil and olives and cereals, as in Joel 2:19, “Behold I will send you corn, and wine and oil”, and in Numbers 18:12, “All the best of the oil, ... wine, . . . wheat, the first fruits”.

In the Hosea passage, A. R. S. Kennedy considers that intoxicating properties were assigned to new wine (tirosh), but W. R. Harper, on the contrary, holds that wine and new wine (Yavin and tirosh) [15] indicate that both fermented and unfermented wines were being emphasized.

It would seem that the prophet is making the general suggestion that every form of excess or worldliness draws men’s hearts away from God.

Another word to be noted in the context of the Hebrew is Asis. It occurs in Isaiah 49:26, Joel 1:5 and Amos 9:13, the translation in each case being new wine or sweet wine and the context suggesting the fresh juice of the grape.

Ashishah occurs four times and means raisins or cake of raisins. It is translated incorrectly in the Authorized Version as flagons, or flagon of wine. Thus in The Song of Songs, 2:5 we find, “Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples”, where it should read, “Stay me with cakes of raisins”, etc. Similarly in Samuel 6:19, in 1 Chronicles 16:3 and in Hosea 3:1 the same mistranslation is made in the A.V. The Revised Versions, however, all translate the word correctly as raisins.

Other of the Hebrew words used are Chemer, which denotes a thick, sticky syrup or foaming juice. It may indicate all types of wine, e.g., “. . . and thou did drink the pure blood of the grape” (Deuteronomy 32:14); Chamar, an Aramaic word used only in Ezra 6:9, 7:2, and Daniel 5:1-4. Its derivation is from the Hebrew Chemer and its use corresponds to Yavin, that is, it may be used of every type of wine.

Yegev, occurs sixteen times; meant originally a cavity or vat in which the grapes or olives were put for the purpose of being trodden; then the whole apparatus of the winepress. In most of the texts it refers rather to the upper than the lower vats. (For examples of use see Appendix.)

Sobe was that which was eagerly sucked up. In Isaiah 1:22, thy wine (sobe) is mixed with water”, it probably indicates boiled grape-juice and therefore a thick, non-alcoholic liquid to be mixed with water.

Boiled grape-juice, however carefully prepared, was liable to become acid, hence, “Their drink is sour” (Hosea 4:18).

In the third instance of the use of this word, “Be not among wine-bibbers”, the word is hyphenated with yavin; sovai-yavin meaning “topers” (Proverbs 23:20).

Mimsak was applicable to many mixtures; of wine with water, or with aromatics. In Proverbs 9:2 we find “Wisdom mingles her wine”, and in Proverbs 23:30, “They that go to seek out mixed wine”. Again in Isaiah 65:11, “But you ... that fill up mingled wine to Destiny” (to Meni, probably a heathen goddess to whom mimsak was offered in sacrifice).

For further comment on other Hebrew words used see the Appendix.

The Drink Offering

In the sacrificial system as outlined in the Old Testament the “drink offering” had its place. The idea of a table communion was, and still is, a common possession of Semitic stock. [16]

The underlying idea of the sacrificial system was of the sharing of a meal with deity. There are frequent references to the solemn partaking of the sacrifice, e.g., “You shall eat before the Lord your God.” (Deuteronomy 12:7, 18; 14:26.)

The best of those things were offered to God which He had, in His Providence, given to them for their daily use.

In Exodus 25:23-29, we see the provision of a table in the sanctuary and the setting thereof with the dishes and bowls of ordinary use for the meal to be offered to Yahweh.

The first mention of a “drink offering” occurs in Genesis 35:14 where Jacob set up a pillar “and

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poured out a drink offering thereon” (vay-yassdk aleihah nesek), that is literally, “he poured a pouring”. This is the only place where the drink offering is mentioned as an independent offering. In all other references the drink offering, or libation, which would seem a more accurate translation, is part of the whole sacrificial offering. The nature of the libation is not here stated.

While there are numerous passages where the “drink offering” is mentioned, there are very few that specify its nature.

In two instances it is definitely stated to be water. In 1 Samuel 7:6 we have a survival of the Feast of the Tabernacles: “And they drew water and poured it out unto the Lord”. The second instance occurs in 2 Samuel 23:16 “(They) drew water out of the well of Bethlehem ... and brought it to David, but he would not drink thereof, but poured it out to the Lord.”

The drink offering that Harmah took, along with her son and other offerings, is explicitly stated in 1 Samuel 1:24 to be a “skin of wine” (ve-navel yayin). However, the fact that it was in a skin bottle strongly suggests that it was unfermented grape juice, as fermentation would burst the strongest skin. (See p. 24, New wine in new skins.)

Again in 2 Samuel 10:3, another carrying a skin of wine” (LXX, askon oinou), the same argument can be put forward that the contents would be unfermented grape juice.

There are definite instructions laid down regarding the use of wine as a libation accompanying the animal sacrifice in Exodus 29:40, “Now this is what thou shall offer upon the altar . . . and the fourth part of a bin of wine (yayin) for a drink offering”.

In Numbers 28:7 ff. the drink offering is mentioned seven times as yayin except in v. 7 where it states, “in the holy place shall thou pour out a ‘drink offering’ of ‘strong drink’ (shekar) Linto the LorT. This is the only case where shekar (lit. sweet wine) is included as a libation.

In the sacrificial system of Israel there is no evidence that the “drink offering” was drunk. No instructions as to how the wine was to be offered have been preserved but from later evidence it appears that, like the blood, it was poured out at the foot of the altar. (Josephus Antiquities 111: 9: 4.)

In the sacrifices made to heathen gods however, the wine poured out was, figuratively, supposed to be drunk by them. Moses in his farewell song, speaking for Yahweh, reproaches his faithless people, “And he shall say, where are their gods ... which ... drank of the wine of their drink offerings?” The gods had accepted their offerings yet had not helped them.

Numbers 18:12, 13 suggests that the libation was not alcoholic, necessarily, by the use of the word tirosh which we have seen was always used of the freshly-expressed juice of the grapes, “All the best of the oil, and all the best of the vintage (tirosh) and the corn they shall offer unto the Lord . . . the first-fruits.” The inclusion of the word “first-fruits” strengthens the assumption that tirosh” refers to either the grapes or grape-juice, in that no time had been allowed for fermentation.

There is a similar use of the word “tirosh” in Genesis 27:28 in the blessing of Jacob by Isaac, “God give thee of the dew of heaven . . . and plenty of corn and wine” (tirosh). The same word is repeated in verse 37 by Isaac, but in speaking of the wine that Jacob used to deceive his father, the word yayin is used; yayin though a generic term covering all kinds of wine yet usually seems to denote alcoholic quality.

The only other instance where yayin is used in connection with the “drink offering” is in Hosea 9:4 where the Prophet tells the people of Israel that in captivity “They shall not offer wine (yayin) offerings unto the Lord”.

References to “drink offerings” where the character is not specified may be found in Leviticus 23:18, 37; Numbers 6:15; 25:31, 29; 29:11-39 (nine references); 1 Chronicles 29:21; 2 Chronicles 29:35.

After the Captivity liquor does not seem to have been used as freely as before. Though the names Nazarite and Rechabite were dropped out of use, their practice and influence was still felt. A Puritanical class, the Chasidim grew up, later to become Pharisees, and a sect known as the Essenes, to which John the Baptist may have belonged.

Contact made with Persia and with the philosophies of such Greek scholars as Epicurus and Pythagoras would also suggest abstinence to pious Jews.

As already noted, it is significant that Ezekiel, in his vision of the New Jerusalem (Chapters 40-48), gives no instructions for the inclusion of the drink offering in the sacrificial system of the ideal Temple. [17]

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WINE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament references to what are clearly intoxicating beverages occur for the most part in connection with those groups of people who had been brought into the Christian faith in Asia-Minor, Greece and Rome, at a time when morals were low and indulgence in alcoholic drinks excessive.

In the Gospels there are only two definite allusions to intoxicating beverage. The first is surely significant. It occurs in the opening chapter of the Gospel of St. Luke in the announcement made to Zaccharias of the coming birth of the forerunner of the Messiah. "For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit." (Luke 1:15).

The second reference is in the parable of the faithless servant who begins, "to eat and to drink and be drunken" (Luke 7:33).

References in the Epistles to inebriety are numerous and explicit. St. Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles and he was frequently confronted with excessive drinking even within the young Christian congregations where the converts were either Jews living in non-Jewish environments or Gentiles brought in from paganism with its bacchanalian feasts (e.g., 1 Corinthians 11:21).

True, there is no absolute prohibition given of the use of wine, but St. Paul had on a number of occasions to rebuke his listeners in no uncertain terms: "Let us walk becomingly . . . not in reveling and drunkenness" (Romans 13:13). Among the offences which will exclude men from the Kingdom of God, he warns them, is drunkenness: "Make no mistake . . . no drunkards . . . will possess the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:10). Again he points out the right course to the Ephesians, "Do not give way to drunkenness and the dissipation that goes with it, but let the Holy Spirit fill you" (Ephesians 5:18). The Galatians, too, need the warning that those who indulge in "drinking bouts, orgies and the like", will never inherit the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:20, 21). [18]

Controversial passages in the New Testament.

There are a number of passages in the Gospels where the nature of the beverage, whether alcoholic or non-alcoholic, is not explicitly stated.

From antiquity through the centuries it was common to express the juice of the grapes and to drink it immediately. We have an instance of this recorded in Genesis 40:11, "And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup and gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand."

To keep the juice from fermenting and so becoming alcoholic, various methods were used-by heating, chilling, filtering, boiling to a thick syrup, or by the addition of known chemicals such as sulfur. When an alcoholic beverage was desired the juice of the crushed grapes was passed through a series of stone vats and left open to the air whence yeast spores would settle on the exposed grape juice and induce fermentation.

The same principle holds in wine-making today. Wines are made by the direct fermentation of part or all the sugar in the fruit juices, usually grapes. The active agent in the fermentation is yeast. Yeast is a microscopically small plant, widely distributed in nature, which produces an enzyme or agent which expedites chemical changes. This enzyme is able to break down compound sugars such as sucrose into simple sugars and produce another enzyme which converts the simple sugars into alcohol and carbon dioxide. To prepare wine, of a sort, it is only necessary to leave the fruit-juice exposed to the air in a warm place. The yeast spores may be present on the fruit or may settle on it as dust from the air. In the commercial manufacture of wine the chance presence of yeast is not depended on and carefully cultured yeast is added. Fermentation continues, unless artificially stopped, until all the sugar has been converted to alcohol, that is, until the concentration of alcohol rises to between 10 to 14 per cent.

The argument has been put forward that the ancients knew of no process to prevent fermentation of grape juice hence all wines must have been alcoholic. [19]

But there is considerable evidence from early writers to support the claim that not only were non-alcoholic wines in common use but were sometimes designated the "best wines". F. R. Lees, Ph.D., and Dawson Burns, M.A., in their carefully authenticated "Temperance Bible Commentary", give passages from Aristotle, Herodotus, Josephus, Pliny, Columella and other Greek and Roman writers mentioning at least five processes by which fruits were preserved and fruit juices were kept from fermenting.

We have no precise information on the nature of the wines which were in use in Palestine in the time of our Lord but it is probable that they would approximate to those in Greece and Rome.

Pliny, who devoted the whole 14th Book of his "Historia Naturalis" (AD 60) to the consideration

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of wines, stated that there were 185 different kinds for drinking. Pliny says, "The most useful (wine) for everybody is that which has its strength broken by the filter. We must bear in mind that there is a juice (sucus) which, by fermenting, would make to itself vires (strength) out of the must". [20]

The Romans were ignorant of distilled liquors and the wines they were in the habit of drinking were generally of low alcoholic content.

The ancient methods of preventing fermentation are said to be still used in Persia and Arab countries today, while in the Western world, non-alcoholic wines and other fruit juices are becoming increasingly popular.

New Wine and New Skins. (Matthew 9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37, 8)

"No one puts new wine into old wine-skins; if he does the wine will burst the skins.... Fresh skins for new wine."

The usual explanation of this parable that new skin-bags were used in order to resist the expansive force of the gas generated by the fermentation does not meet the facts of the case.

For fermentation, grapes were put in vats open to the air even as they are today. The expansive force liberated by grape juice is enormous. Must, that is, the crushed grapes, is one-fifth glucose. This in fermentation develops 47 times its volume of carbon dioxide which if confined would exert a pressure equivalent to that of 34.3 atmospheres (one atmosphere = 15 lbs.). This is equal to about 500 lbs. to the square inch, or a pressure exerted by a modern pressure boiler, or three times the pressure of an average steam raising boiler. [21]

Wine in its first fermentation, if poured into bottles, be they of ox or hog, would burst the skins however new and strong.

That was a fact well known over the centuries in Palestine. "Behold my belly, is as wine which hath no vent," we read in Job 32:19. "Like new bottles it is ready to burst."

The dried skin bottles used in the time of our Lord were however admirably suited to the purpose of preventing fermentation. With their seams well pitched with tar to exclude the air with its yeast spores, fermentation could not take place. It was imperative that new, perfectly clean skins be used, as any dregs left clinging to the inside of the old skins would soon set up a ferment sufficient to ruin the "new wine" being poured in, and burst the bottles.

"New wine" is the translation here of the Greek words "oinos neon" which is equivalent to the Hebrew "tiros" indicating that the fresh juice of the grapes is being indicated.

All this was common knowledge to his listeners, hence it is clear that when Jesus said, "Fresh skins for new wine", he was not primarily concerned with the matter of the quality of wine, whether alcoholic or otherwise. It was not the nature of the wine he was thinking of, but the necessity of keeping his new teaching pure from the corroding ferment of the conservatism and self-righteousness of the Pharisees. A "fresh skin", a new attitude, was required for the "new wine" of the Gospel. The Miracle of Cana (John 2:1-11).

The first miracle, reported by St. John only, is the turning of water into wine at the marriage feast in Cana.

We are not told the nature of the wine for the Greek word oinos may indicate either intoxicating or non-intoxicating wine. The Septuagint (LXX) rendered both yayin and tirosh as oinos (wine) and this was followed by the New Testament, written in Greek, and by its English translations. The use of this generic term, oinos, occurs 33 times in the New Testament and its nature can only be decided, if at all, by reference to the context.

What we do know is the character of Him who made the "best wine" for the guests and it is incredible that He should have deliberately placed before them, at the end of a wedding feast in a small country town, more than 120 gallons of alcoholic wine.

Jesus was not an ascetic; He came that men might have life more abundantly. He was willing to join in and increase the joy of the wedding feast, but it cannot be conceived that He, who came to fulfil all righteousness, would cause to be used in gross excess, that which then, as now, was known to wreck homes, ruin lives, and to bring endless misery.

Perhaps the explanation may be found in that the "best wine" was that which, according to Pliny, had the least trace of ferment or mould. [22] He stated that of the 185 varieties of wine, Falerian was the only one at which a flame could be kindled; this indicating that little or no alcohol was present.

Our Lord came to fulfil not to destroy the prophets. Would He then have countermanded the stern warning of Habakkuk "Woe unto him that makes his neighbors drink and makes them drunk." (2:15).

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We must look for another explanation of the miracle which presents such peculiar difficulties. It is quite improbable that if Jesus had made possible a drunken orgy of this magnitude that it would have passed unnoticed by his enemies. Very strange, too, that the Synoptists should have failed to record such a prominent happening, done at the beginning of His ministry.

McCregor says that from the ethical point of view it is unintelligent and purposeless. [23]

Dr. John McConnachie (24) points out that the Evangelist chose seven signs to illustrate the breaking through of the Divine glory. In chapters 2-4 he sets before us Christ, as the Bringer of a Religion that surpasses and supersedes the Old Religion. This is a story abounding in symbolism; it is not easy to get behind it to the factual basis. Wine he takes as the symbol of the new spiritual Gospel as compared with the water of the old; it is the symbol of the New Covenant and of heavenly joy. Jesus is the true vine and in verse 11 we see the breaking through of that "Glory" which so far has been hidden behind the veil of Jesus of Nazareth. It is the first of the "signs" which point to the Person and work of the Son of God - to transmute the water of the old Judaism into the "best wine" of the Christian gospel and to change man's nature into something richer and higher.

A Wine Bibber

St. Matthew (11:19) and St. Luke (7:34) both record that Jesus' enemies accused him of being a "Wine-bibber".

"The Son of Man came eating and drinking," and they say, "Look at him! a glutton and a drinker" (anthropos phagos kai oinopotes). But no evidence is put forward, at any time, to substantiate the charge. The accusations of enemies are always suspect. They also accused him, falsely, of blasphemy and of threatening to destroy the Temple.

John came living with a hermit's austerity; he was possibly a Nazarite and therefore abstained from all produce of the vine. Jesus was not under that obligation. He came entering into the life and joys of mankind, but the inference that he partook of intoxicating liquors is wholly unsupported. Many people today prefer fruit juices but that does not detract from their geniality.

His enemies had criticized the asceticism of John the Baptist and were equally critical of the genial sociability of Jesus. Dr. A. H. M. Niele says In contrast with the shallow caprice of 'this generation' which condemned the Wisdom by whom both Jesus and John were inspired, the Lord places those who accepted his and John's manner of life at its true worth."

"God's wisdom is proved right by all who are her children." Wisdom (sophia), as in the Jewish Wisdom literature, is the Divine wisdom, God Himself in action (Cf. Luke 11:49) and the children of Wisdom are those who listen to the voice of God and do accordingly.

In the one recorded case where Jesus was offered intoxicating drink, he refused it. (Mark 15:23) It was the custom of wealthy ladies in Jerusalem to provide a soporific draught of wine, mixed with myrrh or some other narcotic, for criminals just before they were nailed to the cross. [26] Although Jesus was tormented with thirst and exhausted with pain, when "offered the drugged wine, he would not take it".

He did, however, receive the vinegar that was later given to him before he bowed and cried, It is accomplished". (John 19:28-30).

The Redeemer was to drain the cup of suffering and He willed to do it in the full possession of His mental powers, not dulled by the taking of any narcotic drug.

Vinegar is not wine. In the New English Bible the word oxous is rendered, "sour wine", but it is rightly vinegar. It is made by fermentation of vegetable substance from which, by chemical action, the alcohol has been converted into acetic acid, that is, vinegar.

The Lord's Supper.

Mark 14:23-25; Matthew 26:27-29; Luke 22:17, 18; 1 Corinthians 11:25.

Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I tell you I shall drink from the fruit of the vine no more until."

The most controversial use of the word wine in the New Testament centers round the elements used by our Lord in his institution of the Last Supper.

Paul and the three Synoptists agree in saying, "he took the cup", while the Synoptists add the further words "the fruit of the vine."

We have seen that when the "fruit of the vine" is used in the Old Testament the word commonly used is "tiros" meaning the newly expressed juice of the grapes.

The Passover took place six months after the vintage, from which it has been argued that the cup

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our Lord used must have been fermented and therefore alcoholic, but as cited already, a number of ways were known to prevent fermentation and so that argument is not valid. [27] Moreover, grapes could be preserved for most of the year by hanging them in cellars - and the caves which honeycomb the limestone rocks of Palestine make ideal cooling chambers. That the Arabs still do this is attested by Niebhur in his "Travels through Arabia". [28]

It would have been quite simple for freshly kept grapes to have been procured for the cup used at the Supper during that week when all ferment was forbidden; or wine made from raisins or from boiled wine would equally have met the ritual requirements.

It is surely significant that the word wine (oinos) is not used once either by the Evangelist or by Paul.

Our Lord took the common food of the common people, bread and the fruit of the vine and sanctified them, using them as symbols of his life and death poured out for all mankind.

St. John lights up the meaning for us, "whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood dwells continually in me".

Had the Word become flesh in any Far Eastern land, Jesus must have chosen other elements, possibly rice and barleytea, for the symbols of the sacred feast. The Synod of the Sumba Christian Church of Indonesia, in March 1967, voted to substitute another beverage, such as fruit juice or tea, for wine, at the celebration of the Eucharist. The use of wine of alcoholic content would constitute a grave offence to Moslem converts indeed, in any country, total abstainers must be sorely tried if required to drink and pass to others an alcoholic cup.

For recovered alcoholics it constitutes more than a matter of conscience. They know they must never again taste any alcoholic beverages. Alcohol alters the chemistry of the brain cells so that a physiological dependence is developed. This suggests an explanation of compulsive drinking and why the addict can never be truly cured of alcoholism. [29]

The cells of the brain and nervous system once destroyed can never be renewed. It is these cells that are most potently affected by alcohol.

The introduction to young communicants of alcoholic wine in the sacred feast implies the sanction of the use of intoxicating beverages by the Church which may have grave consequences in their future lives. St. Paul's word to the Romans was, "Let no obstacle or stumbling-block be placed in a brother's way."

Was the CUP of the Last Supper Alcoholic?

Obedience to the Mosaic Law required the absence of all leaven from the Passover feast. The Law forbade soer (yeast) and hametz (fermenting agent) to be found in the house during the week of the Passover (Exodus 12:15). On the 14th Nisan at 10 AM all the leaven that had been found was burned in the ceremony called "Beur Hamatz" (destruction of the leaven). This purging of the leaven was believed to make them free from sin. Paul writing to the Church at Corinth says, "The old leaven of corruption is working among you. Purge it out. . . . For indeed our Passover has begun: the sacrifice is offered Christ himself. So we who observe the festival must not use the old leaven, the leaven of corruption and wickedness, but only the unleavened bread which is sincerity and truth." (1 Corinthians 5:7, 8.)

Both the Hebrew words, soer and hamatz (yeast and ferment) are translated in the Vulgate (the Latin Bible) as fermentum and in the English translations as 'leaven'. Leaven is the substance added, for example to dough (i.e., yeast) to produce fermentation. Thus leaven and ferment indicate the same process. [30] The fermenting agent, yeast, is a unicellular vegetable organism of the genus saccharomyces. [31]

The command to put away all soer could never have been rigidly carried out if fermented liquors had been retained in the house; "Kal mahmetzeth, lo tokalu" [32] commanded "everything fermented you shall not eat". Alcoholic wine produced by fermentation by the agent yeast must be considered as containing "leaven".

The Mishna, the oral law based on tradition purporting to have come down from Moses, but actually compiled in written form in the second century AD, states in the section on the Passover (1:1) that search for hametz was made by lamp light on the night of the 13th Nisan the search extending to the cellars as "a place where hametz might be brought". The Babylonian Talmud (Volume 5) makes the significant statement that "the beer cellars of Babylon were put on a par with the wine cellars of Palestine if they were frequently used."

The Mishna specifies that anything, food or not food, containing hametz was to be got rid of during the seven days of the Passover, for Exodus 12:19 forbids hametz in the house".

The Talmud, which is an expansion of the Mishna, compiled some centuries later, gives further

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commentaries and expositions of the contents of the Mishna. Again, in the Middle Ages, Maimonides (b. AD 1135), one of the greatest philosophers and physicians of that time, added copious notes to the Talmud and it is in his notes that references first occur to the use of fermented wine at the Passover.

The practice of the modern Jewish church is not unanimous in regard to Passover ritual. Some declare that the use of fermented wine is obligatory while others hold strongly that the ritual wine must be unfermented grape juice or a wine made from raisins.

Rabbi Jos Schlesinger, of Vienna, in "Service for the First Nights of the Passover" writes, "Every substance in compact or liquid form containing even a very small particle of fermented matter is to be considered hametz".

In Melbourne, enquiry reveals that some Synagogues make their own ritual wine; while those using fermented wine are careful not to allow any fortified wines, that is, they allow natural ferment which may be 4 to 12 per cent only Ritual wine is used for weddings as well as for the Passover feast.

Rabbi Jehuda, who is credited with the compilation of the Mishna, approved of boiled wine as the ritual wine of the Passover. This would be thick and require about three parts of water to dilute it. It would be non-alcoholic as alcohol is evaporated about 173 degrees F., well below boiling point (214 degrees F).

What of the Christian Church?

As with the Jewish church today, so does the practice of the Christian churches vary in regard to the nature of the wine to be used in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Those who claim that "correct ritual" requires the use of alcoholic wine should also insist on the use of unleavened bread, for it is quite certain that it would have been unleavened bread that our Lord broke and passed to His disciples saying, "This is my body broken for you; do this in remembrance of me."

At the least, they should be careful not to use fortified wine, as such was unknown until centuries after the institution of the Lord's Supper. But does "correct ritual" require an alcoholic "cup"?

What was the nature of the CUP he gave?

The bread and wine, as eaten in fellowship by Christ and His disciples on the night of His betrayal, and distributed, as often as the rite is celebrated, to those who believe that He was Himself the Paschal Lamb offered for the life of the world, must be interpreted as a continuation of the great Hebrew festival which was regarded as a corporate communion of the Covenant People and which had its origin in the sacred meal eaten when God was preparing for the redemption of his people from their bondage in Egypt.

Our Lord was a Jew; he declared that he came not to destroy the Law but to fulfil it. He met the requirements of the Law in the Synagogues and the Temple. He longed to eat the Passover with His disciples before His death and sent Peter and John to prepare for it. We may legitimately assume that they would prepare, and He would observe, the established Passover regulations. Whether the Last Supper was actually the Passover meal as is implied in the Synoptic accounts, or the evening before as John states, is not important for the question we are considering. The discipline of the unleavened bread would apply in either case.

It is surely unlikely that our Lord would have contravened the Mosaic Law by using fermented wine (which is leaven) in this His memorial meal with His disciples.

He took the "cup" and gave to them, saying "Drink you all of it". But neither in the Synoptics nor in Paul's letter to the Corinthians is the nature of the cup specified.

He had used the word "cup" figuratively in different senses on several occasions when speaking to His disciples. The word would have had great significance to them at the meal, as they recalled His question, "Can you drink the cup that I drink?" And still deeper meaning, in the light of the crucifixion, as they recalled the anguish of His prayer in the garden, "Father, if it be Thy will, take this cup away from me. Yet not as I will but as Thou wilt."

In the Great Discourse on the Bread of Life (John 6:52 ff) Jesus declared, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood dwells continually in me and I dwell in him". The literalists found this was "more than they could stomach" (N.E.B.), but Jesus in a glowing word explained to them that his words were not to be taken in a material sense. "The spirit alone gives life; the flesh is of no avail; the words which I have spoken to you are both spirit and life."

The elements of the sacrament are real outward facts but their true worth lies in the spiritual truth which expresses itself in and through them. Food and drink are in themselves neutral matters; they only become of moral import through their effects and consequences. The enormity of the drink evil today with

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all its attendant evils and miseries, and the unquestioned verdict of science that alcohol is a narcotic, an analgesic, a habit-forming drug of addiction, classed as a poison, makes the offering of a cup containing even a minute portion of that drug, in the sacred name of Christ, a very grave responsibility.

The basic principle of the Christian ethic is social responsibility. The use of alcohol in any amount involves one in the cause of untold misery of the millions who are its victims.

Total abstinence for the sake of the weaker brother is the criterion on which the Christian must make his decision. The personal danger aspect of the problem does not provide an adequate answer. The freedom of choice of one individual may forge fetters of a slavery worse than death for another; "Love cannot wrong a neighbor: the whole law is summed up in love" (Romans 13:10).

It is an unquestioned rule in the rehabilitation of an alcoholic that he must never again taste alcohol: If your brother is outraged by what you eat then your conduct is no longer guided by love". "For none of us lives . . . for himself alone." (Romans 14:15 and 7.)

Jesus in His farewell address to His disciples had spoken of Himself as the true vine, "I am the vine, you are the branches". In this farewell feast He gave to them of the "fruit of the vine", suggesting that He wished the analogy of the living vine to be brought to remembrance by the life-giving "blood of the grape." [33]

The consistency and beauty of the sacramental symbol used by our Lord demanded the absence of fermentation. He had used "leaven" as typifying the doctrine of the Pharisees. To both Jew and Gentile leaven was the symbol of decay, corruption and sin. Because it represented sin, the cleansing of the houses from all ferment during the week of unleaven bread, symbolized also the cleansing of sin from the heart. [34]

M'Neile, in his "Gospel According to St. Matthew", says, "Leaven in the Old Testament occurs only in ritual prohibitions, hence its evil connotation in the New Testament apart from the parable of Matthew 13:33. [35]

That parable is the only time its use can be thought of as an exception. But here it is not the ferment that is the subject of the comparison but the explosive power that is in the ferment, or possibly, as A. R. S. Kennedy thinks, the "silent, all-pervading action of leaven in a mass of dough." [36]

St. Paul speaking of immorality among the Corinthians says, "A little leaven leavens all the lump. For indeed our Passover has begun, the sacrifice is offered-Christ himself. So we who observe the feast must not use the old leaven of corruption and wickedness, but only the unleavened bread which is sincerity and truth."

It is unlikely that Jesus would have contravened the strict Jewish law against the use of any leaven at Passover time. And it is unconceivable that, on this last solemn occasion, He could have taken, as a symbol of His precious blood shed for the remission of the sins of all mankind, that which had been corrupted by fermentation and deprived of all its nutrient qualities, rather than the rich, natural, health-giving juice of the "Fruit of the vine".

In the mind of our Lord at His memorial feast we see two great aspect of His life and work present, the eschatological and the sacrificial. He was the promised Messiah, but to attain His glory He had to suffer and die "a ransom" for many.

We see the background of this thought in the words, I tell you this, never again shall I drink from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of God". (Mark 14:25)

The Greek gives a shade of meaning that is lost in the English translation - the word for new is *kainos*, a new kind, not *neos* the usual word for new wine.

The "wine" of the Kingdom of God will be of a new kind, the fulfillment of the fruit of the vine" that He, the True Vine, is offering them now. And again we hear the unspoken refrain, "The words I have spoken to you are both spirit and life".

The Miracle of Pentecost (Acts of the Apostles 2:1-15).

During the course of the day of Pentecost, we are told that the Holy Spirit descended on the followers of Jesus and they began to speak in foreign tongues, so that the crowd which gathered was amazed and astonished.

Seeing the ecstatic behavior of these Christians some sneered, "They are brimful of new wine (*gleukos*)".

We cannot gather with certainty from the account whether the disciples had received "the gift of diverse languages" or if the "tongues" were like those alluded to by Paul in 1 Corinthians, "When a man is using the language of ecstasy he is talking with God, for no man understands him; he is no doubt inspired,

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but he speaks mysteries” (14:2).

We have no confirmation that the gift was a permanent one. If the “other tongues” were ecstatic utterances such as were riot uncommon in the early church and have been evidenced in evangelistic meetings through the centuries, it was natural that the pagan crowd would put their behavior down to drunken babbling. [37]

The point we are concerned with, in this short treatise, is the use of the Greek word, gleukos, translated in the English versions as new wine. It is the only occasion when this word appears in the New Testament. We have seen that in the Greek translation of the Old Testament the Hebrew word tirosh, meaning the newly, unfermented juice of the grape, was always rendered as gleukos.

The use of the word here is puzzling. Was the sneering taunt meant to convey that, although the followers of Jesus were reputed to be drinkers of gleukos only, that is, total abstainers, it was evident from their behavior that they were inebriated?

Peter indignantly refuted the insinuation, “These men are not drunk (on ... methuosin) as you imagine”. He strengthens the denial by pointing out that no Jew, abstainer or otherwise, would be inebriated at nine in the morning, for it was well known that Jews only drank wine with their flesh meal taken in the evening. [38] No, their ecstasy was spiritual, he goes on to point out, and the fulfillment of prophecy. [39]

The Case of Timothy

When we come to the Epistles we find quite a number of references to wine and its effects. This is not extraordinary when we consider that drinking was an established custom in Palestine and all neighboring countries.

The effects of alcohol on family and community life were, no doubt, basically as they are today, but the extent and intensity of the problems involved could not be comparable with those of a modern economic and industrial society.

Today, mechanization of transport and industry have multiplied risks many fold; distilled liquors and fortified wines have increased those risks; better economic conditions have made greater spending capacity possible, and social pressures made it difficult for either young or old to abstain from alcoholic beverages.

St. Paul has a good deal to say in his various letters to the churches on the matter of inebriety although he never insists that converts to Christianity become total abstainers.

Advice to Timothy

There is only one instance where possibly he advises the use of an alcoholic beverage. In writing to Timothy, who was apparently a total abstainer and a dyspeptic, he suggests, “Stop drinking nothing but water, take a little wine (oinos) for your digestion and your frequent ailments” (1 Timothy 5:23). The Creek word used, “hudropotei”, means to be a drinker of water in the sense of being an abstainer from other beverages; it is the only use of the word in the New Testament.

The A.V. has 1or your stomach’s sake”. Moffatt omits the whole verse which he holds to be either a marginal gloss or else misplaced. The words certainly disrupt the theme of the discourse but, if with the A.V. and the Revised Versions we accept them, they are seen to relate only to a medical use of wine prescribed by Paul for a particular case, at a time when scientific medicine as practiced today was unknown.

Was there a case for wine as a medicine?

Today alcohol is classed as a drug having sedative, analgesic, narcotic, hypnotic and anaesthetic properties. ‘The sedative and intoxicating actions of alcohol are due to an alteration in the activity of the brain induced by the presence of alcohol in and about the cells of the brain. Alcohol is a volatile anaesthetic. “ [40]

All of these properties of alcohol can be extremely valuable when used for specific treatment by professional men with medical and scientific knowledge, but when used ad lib. in alcoholic beverages the matter is an entirely different one.

Today there are specific drugs for particular complaints which serve the purpose much better and do not have the addictive properties of alcohol. The “Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol”, 1957, says of the effect on the stomach, “Strong alcoholic beverages affect the mucosa or lining of the stomach and intestine. As a result of these changes there may be impairment of nutrients such as vitamins” (p. 75).

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When Paul wrote to Timothy some of the properties of alcohol were known by experience. They were seen to relieve pain, induce sleep, quiet nerves when taken in small quantities. In the absence of other medicine, wine along with oil were the standard remedies in time of sickness. Even the strongest beverage contained no more than 14 per cent of alcohol and Paul, in advising “a little wine”, was prescribing a medicinal dose and in no wise advocating that Timothy give up his habit of abstinence.

However, when Paul advised “a little wine” (oinos) it is by no means certain that he was advocating an alcoholic wine as non-intoxicating grape-juice was also covered by the word wine.

Grape-juice today would be heartily approved for its health giving properties. Grapes are rich in glucose, one of the few substances in nature able to pass into the blood without need of digestion. This is also true of alcohol which a Doctor has called “the illegitimate son of sugar”. The difference is that glucose is a true food in that it gives calories, proteins and vitamins, and has no deleterious effects, while alcohol gives calories but provides no protein, minerals or vitamins and can cause serious damage to the important tissues of the brain, liver and other organs of the body.

Moreover, there were special wines in use at that time for medical purposes. It is interesting to find that Athenaeus (AD 280) [41] supplies the information that there was a “wine” for stomach complaints. He gives the recipe – “Let him take gleukos either mixed with water or warmed, especially that called protropos, as being very good for the stomach.”

There was a case for Paul, who was not a Doctor, to prescribe “a little wine” (oirios or gleukos) two thousand years ago, but the medical fraternity does not look to the Bible today for guidance in medical procedures. In 1910, the physicians of U.S.A. listed alcohol ninth of the most useful drugs. Today it would not be included,” according to Dr. H. W. Haggard, the Director (Professor) of the Laboratory of Applied Physiology, Yale, although it is still a most valuable substance in the hands of chemists.

“Let your MODERATION be known to all men!”

These words, from Paul’s letter to the Philippians (4:5) have been taken by some, who are ignorant of the real meaning of the word so translated by the Authorized Version of the New Testament, and who have not bothered to study the context, as a charter to justify so-called “social drinking”. But moderation, in the original Greek, epiekes, has nothing to do with drinking. It means magnanimity (N.E.B.), or forbearance (Moffatt), or gentleness or kindness. The Vulgate translates it as “modestia”. The passage (Philippians 4:4-7) shows there is not the slightest connection with drinking.

Social drinking in recent years has entrenched itself deeply in the community. It is estimated that 75 per cent. of the population over fifteen years of age partakes, in some measure, in alcoholic beverages. The great majority may remain moderate drinkers, but it is an accepted estimate that about 9 per cent of all drinkers will eventually lapse into alcoholism. A conservative estimate of alcoholics in Australia is 200,000 in a population of 12 millions.

That knowledge should make every committed Christian and responsible citizen pause before setting the most moderate example before others, particularly before young people on whom social pressures weigh most heavily. A Christian society which does not disapprove of moderate drinking provides a milieu in which abstinence will decline and in which the number of alcoholics will steadily increase, while the rehabilitation of those already alcoholics becomes more difficult. Medical and psychiatric treatment can not succeed unless the patient becomes totally abstinent, and to do that he needs God, and the help of a God-fearing fellowship which will not put temptation in his way.

The basic principle of the Christian ethic is social responsibility. Jesus did not offer rules of conduct or prohibitions. He refused to legislate because he was concerned rather with the heart of man as the spring of conduct. He gave telling illustrations of right conduct—the story of the Good Samaritan. He was primarily concerned with the individual as a soul to be saved-or lost. And so he told the stories of the three lost things and spoke very sternly about those who put stumbling blocks in the way of others: “It is impossible but that occasions of stumbling should come but woe unto him through whom they come” (Matthew 18:7).

Today the tendency to regard moderate drinking as the norm for society is disturbing, and the pressure to increase drinking by all manner of propaganda is very heavy. Moderate drinkers are nevertheless the major influence in recruiting new drinkers by their example, for no one was ever persuaded to drink by watching an excessive toper.

Education in regard to the nature and effects of alcohol is required, and may be a deterrent to some, but it can never off-set the power of a habituating drug of addiction once the taste has been acquired.

The Christian can not avoid the challenge, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” St. Paul gave the answer-

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”Love cannot wrong a neighbor, therefore the whole law is summed up in love.”

Voluntary abstinence is not a preaching of intolerance; it is the persuasion of love.

THREE WORDS FROM SAINT PAUL

In the First Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians he writes “Keep awake and be sober. Sleepers sleep at night and drunkards drink at night, but we, who belong to the daylight, must be sober.” (5:6-8).

As the Greek word for sober, *nepho* and its derivatives, occurs repeatedly in the Epistles, its meaning demands consideration.

It is used in 1 Corinthians 15:34, “Come back to a sober and upright life and leave your sinful ways.”

In 1 Timothy 3:2, 8, 11, it is laid down that “a bishop must be vigilant . . . sober . . . not given to wine” (*nephalion*, *sophrone*, *me paraoinon*) that is literally, he must be abstinent, self-controlled, not near wine. He was to be abstinent in habit so as to be in perfect control of his senses, and, as pastor of his flock, was to withhold his presence and sanction from those places inimical to the sobriety of himself and others.

Paul goes on to say (in verses 8, and 11) the same advice holds for the men and women deacons.

In the Epistle to Titus the bishop is again urged “not to be given to wine”, the older men to be abstinent and the women not to be addicted to wine. (2:2).

In 2 Timothy 2:26, it is the “refractory” Paul is hoping “may come to their senses” (N.E.B.) or “recover themselves” (A.V.). In each case the translation is of the Greek, *ananeposin*, recover sobriety. In 2 Timothy 4:5, the translation “be sober” is retained.

In 1 Peter, the N.E.B. renders the word, as self-controlled, and the A.V. as be sober (1 Peter 1:13). (See also 1 Peter 4:7, 5:8.)

The word “*nepho*” is also used by Philo and Josephus, Jewish contemporaries of Paul. Josephus, the historian, uses it twice in reference to priests, “They are in all respects pure and abstinent” (*nephalion*). Ant. b. 3: 12, S. 2.

Philo in his treatise on “Drunkenness” says, “The truly wise man . . . steadfastly setting himself . . . against wine. . .” (S. 32). [42] Liddell and Scott’s Lexicon defines *nepho* as “to be sober”, especially to drink no wine”. The Analytical Greek Lexicon as, “to be sober, to be abstinent in respect to wine, or wholly free from the influence of alcohol”.

Arndt and Gringrich add that in the New Testament the usage of *nepho* is figurative, meaning to be free from every form of mental and spiritual drunkenness, or excessive passion, and to be self-controlled.

In classical Greek the original connotation seems to have been to abstain from intoxicating liquors. In the LXX *nepho* occurs only in combination some four times as in Genesis 9:24 when Noah “became sober” from his wine, “*exenepse apo tou oinou*”. In the other examples the connection is definitely with becoming sober after drunkenness.

In using *nepho* and its derivatives, the writers of the Epistles may or may not have been cognizant of the original meaning of the word, but, although using it metaphorically, there is a strong case that they did so in the sense of abstinence from liquor.

The second word is *egkrateia* (*egkrates*, *egkrateuornai*) which is usually translated in the A.V. of the New Testament as “temperance”; the N.E.B. renders the meaning more exactly as “self-restraint” or “self-control”.

There are two references where the word refers to bodily appetites (1 Corinthians 7:9 and Acts 24:25). Otherwise the indication is mainly to general virtue in character, as in 1 Corinthians 9:25; Galatians 5:23; Titus 1:8; 2 Peter 1:6.

The root meaning given by Liddell and Scott is ‘laving the mastery over; self-disciplined’ and by Green, as “self-controlled, temperate, abstinent”. The root meaning points to avoidance of intemperance in the form of drunkenness, but in actual usage it condemns all forms of self-indulgence. From the New Testament view it is directly opposed to every form of excess, “You clean the outside . . . you have filled the inside . . . by self-indulgence (*a-krasias*)”. (Matthew 23:25)

The Apostle regards other forms of lack of self-control as intemperance, as well as fondness for too much wine. (1 Timothy 3:2.)

Self-control in the sense of mastery over all tempers, appetites and passions has a prominent place

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in the lists of Christian virtues; St. Paul writes, “The harvest of the Spirit is love ... and self-control” (Galatians 5:22). Thus *egkrateia* closes the list of the fruits of the Spirit while “drinking bouts, orgies and the like” closed the “works of the flesh” cited in verse 21. Those who are “led by the Spirit” (v. 18), “directed by the Spirit” (v. 25), receive the grace of self-mastery.

The way to deal with sinful tendencies is not by regulation of law but to crucify them - to crucify the flesh with its worldly desires and passions. The importance attached to “temperance” in the code of Christian ethics is clear and experience has proved that the spirit of temperance cannot be more wisely exemplified than in promoting abstinence from alcoholic beverages.

Knowledge of the nature and effects of alcohol prompts the practice of abstinence which is undoubtedly followed by practical benefits, both physical and economic. Abstinence is the only sure shield against many of the evils that beset society; especially the youthful, but also the mature. One has only to think of the tragedy of the road toll due to alcohol and of all the other results deleterious to homes and individuals, to the community and to the nation, to acknowledge that voluntary abstinence may truly be looked to as a fruit of the Spirit.

According to St. Thomas Aquinas, “There are things contrary to a good condition of life and the temperate man does not use them in any manner, for that would be a sin against temperance.”

That is, the good things of life should be used with self restraint but those that are harmful, whether physically, mentally or spiritually should be eschewed entirely. St. Paul puts it more succinctly, “Abstain from every form of evil”. Beverages containing a drug scientifically classed as narcotic and addictive certainly qualify as an evil.

The third word is *Sophroneia* and its derivatives. The meaning is “to be of a sound mind”; sometimes “to practice self control; to be discreet; temperate; moderate”. (Liddell & Scott).

The three words, *nispho*, *egkrateia* and *sophroneia*, are seen to be interchangeable often in meaning, as in 1 Timothy 3:3, “a bishop must be sober (*nephalion*), temperate (*sophroneia*) . . .”.

The root meaning of the word is seen in Mark 5:15, “They saw the madman ... in his right mind”; also in 2 Corinthians 5:13, “We are beside ourselves ... for God ... if we are in our right mind.” (*sophroneumen*).

In Titus 1:8 we are told “a bishop must be no drinker (*me paraoinon*) ... right-minded (*sophroneia*), temperate (*egkrateia*)”. The A.V. has sober for *sophroneia*.

The word is used in speaking of the right character of the women in 1 Timothy 2:9,15 and 3:11, and Titus 2:5; they should be sober-minded, discreet, modest.

Here the writer sees very truly, as did Amos centuries before, that women are the barometer of the spiritual health of a people. If women let down the standards of a society, the moral climate of the nation soon follows (Amos 4:1-3). There are those who lay the blame for the decline of Rome largely at the feet of the dissolute Roman matrons.

In the other examples of the use of “*sophroneia*” the reference is in general to virtue or prudence and to the denial of worldly passion as in Titus 2:12, “For the grace of God has dawned upon the world with healing for all mankind. And by it we are disciplined to renounce godless ways and worldly desires, and to live a life of temperance, honesty and godliness.” Here, as in verse 7, the Greek word used is “*sophronos*”; the younger men are also urged to be temperate and set a good example.

In 1 Peter 4:3-5 a dark picture is drawn of the times and Christians are enjoined not to live as the pagan world, “in license ... drunkenness ... and tipping” (v. 3). Then in verse 6 comes the solemn warning words, “The end of all things is upon us, so you must lead an ordered and sober (*sophroneia*) life, given to prayer”. Taken as countering the picture of verse 3, the emphasis of sober or abstinent strongly suggests the meaning is from alcoholic beverages.

MODERATION AND ABSTINENCE

Allow no one therefore to take you to task about what you eat or drink.”

These words in Colossians 2:16 are sometimes quoted as a sanction for freedom of action and conscience by the protagonists for “moderate drinking”. Sometimes they are urged as a case for “total abstinence”; “Do not handle this, do not taste that, do not touch the other” (v. 21).

Neither position can be maintained from this particular passage; for Paul is dealing with a specific heresy which contended that all matter was evil. Paul points out that the whole universe was created by

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God; all life is His; there can be no separation between the secular and the sacred; between the material and the spiritual. Verse 21 is a quotation used by St. Paul direct from the heretical doctrine.

St. Paul's concern here is in supporting the case of Christian freedom against superstition and the taboos of gnosticism as well as from the legalism of Judaism.

It is riot true that the case for abstinence from alcoholic beverages is based on any theory of mortification of the body. On the contrary, it has been evidenced that the use of alcohol may cause malnutrition and have other serious effects on the well-being of both mind and body.

The freedom of the Christian, however, does not mean there is to be no discipline. In Paul's letter to Timothy he reminds him that "God gave us no craven spirit, but one to inspire strength, love, and self-discipline . . . he . . . called us to a dedicated life." (2 Timothy 1:7, 9)

The freedom advocated by Paul for the individual Christian was limited by the welfare of his neighbors. He states this in his letter to the Roman church, "For no man lives for himself alone . . . If your brother is outraged by what you eat then your conduct is no longer guided by love" (14:7,15). He goes on to develop the theme, "Do not ruin the work of God for the sake of food . . . It is a fine thing to abstain from eating meat or drinking wine, or doing anything which causes your brother's downfall (vv. 20, 21). Each of us must consider his neighbor and think what is for his good and what will build up the common life" (15:2).

"The freedom from which, in which, and for which man has been created is freedom-in-responsibility, freedom-in-and-for love. The Christian freedom is a paradox. It is God who calls him, gives him responsibility, and his freedom is only completed when he remains in dependence on God. The maximum of his dependence on God is the maximum of his freedom." [43] "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Corinthians 3:17).

To the Thessalonians Paul wrote, "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

Science has classified alcohol as a poison, and as a habituating drug of addiction. The World Health Organization classes it as a "drug of addiction". Used in alcoholic beverages it depresses the nervous system even in small amounts, and lowers efficiency. In excess it is the cause of physical, mental and sociological problems. It disrupts family life; it is responsible for much crime and illness; for a great proportion of accidents on the road and in industry; for economic waste and untold misery. The New English Bible puts the word to the people in Thessalonica, "Avoid the bad of whatever kind".

Abstinence is not a negative attitude but a dynamic one. It takes courage to go against the crowd; much easier to gain a spurious popularity by joining in with them. The tendency to consider "Moderate drinking" the norm of society is very disturbing.

If society has found out, as it has for thousands of years, that the net result of the use of alcoholic beverages is injurious to the drinkers and their families and to society in general, then there is a moral and religious duty to do something about it.

Today the universal rule of Christian conduct formulated by St. Paul, in his letters to the Roman and Corinthian churches, confronts the individual conscience with a greater urgency and insistence than ever before in the history of experience. [44] St. Paul gives the ultimate argument for total abstinence on the part of the Christian, "If food be the downfall of my brother I will never eat meat any more, for I will not be the cause of my brother's downfall". [45]

"Love your neighbor as your self. Love cannot wrong a neighbor; therefore the whole law is summed up in love."

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Appendix

Hebrew and Greek words translated "WINE"

Yayin - generic term for the juice of the grape either fermented or unfermented; what is pressed out.

Tirosh - freshly expressed grape-juice in its natural condition, translated "new wine" eleven times, "wine" twenty-six times, "sweet wine" once, "vintage" three in the A.V. Always "new wine" in the R.V. Not used of fermented wine.

Shekar - what satiates, intoxicates; a saccharine drink rendered "strong drink" (21), "strong wine" (1). Described as a liquor made from dates, barley, etc., and always as a curse; Greek - "sikera", sometimes methusma or methe; once oinos in LXX. Occurs once only in New Testament.

Asis - anything pressed on or trodden out. Rendered "juice" (1), "new wine" (2), sweet wine (2). Not necessarily unfermented; not to be confused with "tirosh". (Isaiah 49:26; Joel 1:5, 3, 18; Amos 9:13.)

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Ashishah - denotes "a cake of raisins". Rendered wrongly in A.V. as "flagons" but corrected in the Revised Versions.

Chemer - a thick, sticky syrup; foaming juice. Indicates all kinds of wine. (Isaiah 27:2.)

Chamar - the Aramaic form used in Ezra (6:9) and Dan. (5:1-4) literally means "foaming" and denotes fermented wine.

Sobe - anything sucked in or up; probably indicated inspissated or boiled wines. Non-intoxicating beverage. Sebe-yayin - "topers", literally soakers of wine.

Shemarim - what is preserved, sediment. Rendered "dregs", "Ices", "wine in the lees". (Isaiah 25:6.)

Nasek - drink offering, literally that which is poured out; a libation.

Minisak - anything mixed. Rendered "drink-offering", "mixed wine" (Isaiah 65:11)

Yegev - originally a vat or trough; then used as a wine-press or wine-vat. Occurs 16 times, e.g., Deuteronomy 18:27.

Enab - ripe or round grape, grape-cake. (Hosea 3:1)

Chomets - vinegar, sour or unripe grapes. (Greek oxos).

Mistch - general term for beverage especially wine (Ezra 3:7; Daniel 1:10.)

Oinos - generic term (used in the LXX) for all kinds of wine except "shekar". Also in New Testament (Greek) 32 times.

Sikera - strong drink (Creek). (See "shekar".)

Gleukos - used once only (Acts 2:13), "new wine"; corresponds to "tirosh"; never fermented.

Metbuo - to be drunk, or filled to the full (Greek).

Inferences to Wines as used in Scripture

Favorable to use

Yayin Genesis 49:11,12; Proverbs 9:2,5; Song Solomon 7:9; Isaiah 55:1; Hosea 14:7; Zechariah 10:7.

Chemen Isaiah 27:2 (some Manuscripts have "Chemed", pleasant).

Tirosh Joel 2:19.

Oinos Revelation 6:6.

Unfavorable to use or character

Yayin Deuteronomy 32:33; Psalm 60:3; 75:3; 78:65; Proverbs 4:7; Isaiah 29:9; 51:7; Zechariah 9:15.

Shekar Isaiah 29:9.

Asis Isaiah 49:26; Jeremiah 48:11; Zephaniah 1:12.

Shemarim Jeremiah 48:12; Zechariah 1:12.

Oinos Revelation 14:8; 14:10; 16:19; 17:2; 18:3; 19:15.

Specifically as a blessing

Yayin Psalm 104:15; Amos 9:14.

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Asis Joel 3:18; Amos 9:13.
Chemar Deuteronomy 32:14.
Shemarim Isaiah 25:6.
Tirosh Genesis 27:28; Numbers 18:12; Deuteronomy 7:13; 11:14; Proverbs 3:10 Isaiah 65:8; Jeremiah 31:12 Hosea 2:8-9; Joel 2:19; Zechariah 9:1.

Definitely bad

Yayin Leviticus 10:10; Proverbs 20:1.
Shekar Proverbs 20:1.

Associated with food

Yayin Genesis 14:18; 27:15; Judges 19:19. 1 Samuel 10:3; 16:20; 25:18; 2 Samuel 16:1-2; 1 Chronicles 12:40; 2 Chronicles 2:10; 15:2; 2 Chronicles 11:11; Nehemiah 5:15; 13:15; Job 1:13, 18; Ecclesiastes 9:7; Isaiah 22:13; Jeremiah 40:10, 12; Daniel 1:5, 8, 16; 10:3.
Yegev Deuteronomy 16:13; 15:14; Numbers 18:27, 30.
Tirosh Genesis 27:28, 37; Numbers 18:12; Deuteronomy 7:13, 11:14; 12:17; 14:23; 18:4; 28:51; 33:28; 2 Kings 18:32; 2 Chronicles 31:5; 32:28. Nehemiah 5:11; 10:37, 39; 13:5,12; Psalm 4:7; Isaiah 36:17; 62:8. Jeremiah 31:12; Hosea 2:8, 9, 2:22, 7:14; Joel 2:19, 24; Zechariah 9:17; Micah 6:15; Haggai 1:11; Joel 1:10.

Consequences bad

Yayin Genesis 19:32, 33, 34, 35; 1 Samuel 1:14, 15; 25:37; 2 Samuel 13:28; Ester 1:7, 10; Proverbs 23:30; 31:4, 6; Isaiah 5:11, 12; 5:22.
Oinos 1 Peter 4:3.

Exhortation to drink

Yayin Song Solomon 5:1.
Shekar Song Solomon 5:1 (LXX translates here methuo).
Oinos 1 Timothy 5:23.

Wine forbidden

Yayin Proverbs 20:1; 23:31; Numbers 6:3,4; Judges 13:4, 7, 14.
Shekar Numbers 6:3; Judges 13:4; 13:7; Luke 1:15 (sikera).
Oinos 1 Timothy 3:3; Ephesians 5:18.

Forbidden to Priests

Yayin Leviticus 10:9; Jeremiah 35:6, 8, 14; Proverbs 23:20; Ezekiel 44:21.
Shekar Leviticus 10:9.
Oinos Titus 1:7.

Inferences of different kinds of wine

Be-kahl yayin Nehemiah 5:18; Song Solomon 8:2.

Used for a drink-offering

Yayin Exodus 29:40; Leviticus 23:13; Numbers 15:5, 7, 10; Numbers 28:14; Deuteronomy 32:38; 1 Samuel 1:24; Hosea 9:4.
Shekar Numbers 28:7.
Chamar Ezra 6:9; 7:22.

Unspecified nature

Yayin Deuteronomy 29:6; Joshua 9:4, 13; 1 Chronicles 27:27; Nehemiah 2:1; Ester 5:6, 7-2, 7, 8; Job 32:19; Proverbs 21:17; Ecclesiastes 2:3, 10:19; Song Solomon 1:2, 4; 4:10; Isaiah 56:12; Jeremiah 35:2, 5; Ezekiel 27:18; Amos 2:8,12, 6:6; Hosea 4:11; Micah 2:11; Haggai 2:12.
Shekar Deuteronomy. 29:6; Isaiah 56:12; Micah 2:11.
Yegev Numbers 18:27; 18:30; Deuteronomy 15:14; Judges 7:25; 2 Kings 6:27; Job 24:11;

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Ashishah	Isaiah 5:2; Jeremiah 48:33; Hosea 9:2; Zechariah 14:10.
Asis	Hosea 3:1.
Sobe	Isaiah 49:26.
Tirosh	Hosea 4:18; Isaiah 1:22.
Oinos	Hosea 4:11.
	Matthew 9:17, 18; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37, 38; 7:33, 10:34; John 2:3, 9, 10, 4:46; Romans 14:21; 1 Timothy 5:23.

ALCOHOL AND THE SCRIPTURES

Statistics

Average Weekly Intake

Australia	Spirits (Liters of Pure Alcohol)	Beer (Liters)	Wine (Liters)	Total (Liters of Pure Alcohol)
1961/62	0.83	98.8	5.1	6.4
1962/63	0.81	100.1	5.3	6.5
1963/64	0.87	103.5	5.5	6.7
1964/65	0.94	106.8	5.6	7
1965/66	0.83	107	6.1	7
1966/67	0.83	109.7	6.8	7.2
1967/68	0.93	113.8	7.6	7.6
1968/69	0.91	117	8.2	7.7
1969/70	1.02	119.4	8.9	8.1
1970/71	1.04	121	8.7	8.2
1971/72	1.08	120.9	8.8	8.2
1972/73	1.22	123.5	9.7	8.6
1973/74	1.23	134.1	10.9	9.3
1974/75	1.18	136.5	12.2	9.4
1975/76	1.14	133.5	12.9	9.4
1976/77	1.26	134.1	13.5	9.6
1977/78	1.32	134.8	14.2	9.7
1978/79	1.07	130.8	16.4	9.6
1979/80	1.01	132.3	17.3	9.6
1980/81	1.1	129.3	18.2	9.7
1981/82	1.16	128.6	19.1	9.8
1982/83	1.17	121.7	19.7	9.5
1983/84	1.12	117.8	20.4	9.3
1984/85	1.2	114.5	21.3	8.9
1985/86	1.27	115.5	21.6	9
1986/87	1.18	111	20.9	8.7
1987/88	1.24	113	20.8	8.8
1988/89	1.29	115.4	19.3	8.7
1989/90	1.28	113.9	18.5	8.5
1990/91	1.18	110.6	17.9	8.2
1991/92	1.12	104	18.7	7.8
1992/93	1.17	99.5	18.3	7.5
1993/94	1.37	98	18.6	7.7
1994/95	1.28	96.8	18.4	7.6
1995/96	1.27	95.3	18.3	7.5
1996/97	1.22	95.5	19	7.5
1997/98	1.28	94.5	19.7	7.6
1998/99	1.35	91.2	19.6	7.6
1999/00	1.33	95	19.7	7.8

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Australia	Sex	Sex	Socioeconomic status (quintile)				
	Male	Female	1	2	3	4	5
Tobacco smoking status							
Smoker	25.7	20.8	25.8	25.1	23.7	23.6	18.4
Not recent or never smoker	74.3	79.2	74.2	74.9	76.3	76.4	81.6
Risk of long-term alcohol-related harm							
Abstainer	14.1	20.8	21.1	19.5	17.2	16.2	13.6
Low risk	75.6	69.8	68.9	70.6	72.9	73.6	77.2
Risky/high risk	10.2	9.4	10	90.9	9.9	10.2	9.2
Risk of short-term alcohol-related harm(a)							
Abstainer	14.1	20.8	21.1	19.5	17.2	16.2	13.6
Low risk	46.5	49.6	47.1	48.2	47.3	47.4	49.6
Risky/high risk	39.3	29.6	31.9	32.2	35.5	36.3	36.8
Use of any illicit drug							
Recent use	19.8	14.2	16	16.3	18.1	17.7	17
Not used recently/ever	80.2	85.8	84	83.7	81.9	82.3	83
Use of any illicit drug except marijuana/cannabis							
Recent use	9.4	7.4	7.2	8.1	9.2	9.1	8.7
Not used recently/ever	90.6	92.6	92.8	91.9	90.8	90.9	91.3
Use of marijuana/cannabis							
Recent use	15.8	10	12.4	12.1	13.6	13.4	13.4
Not used recently/ever	84.2	90	87.6	87.9	86.4	86.6	86.6
Perceptions of Drugs associated with a 'drug problem'							
Alcohol	7.9	7.7	6.7	8.2	7.8	7.6	8.4
Tobacco	2.8	2.6	3.1	3.1	2.2	2.5	2.4
Marijuana	23.8	23.5	28.7	27.4	23.9	22.2	16.8
Heroin	50.6	49.6	44.9	44.9	50.8	51.8	58.1
Other	14.1	16	16	15.7	14.6	15.4	13.9
None/can't think of any	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.5
Most serious concern for the community							
Excess drinking of alcohol	20	24.6	18.7	21.8	22.7	22.8	24.7
Tobacco smoking	20.3	17.6	17.6	18.7	17.9	19.9	20.6
Marijuana/cannabis use	5.1	5.6	7	6.4	5.1	4.5	3.7
Heroin use	36.6	33	35.2	32.9	36.3	35.1	35.1
Other	17.8	18.9	21.2	19.8	17.7	17.5	15.7
None of these	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Approval of regular use by an adult							
Alcohol	81.4	68	73.1	72	74.9	75.4	78.4
Tobacco	42.5	36.8	44.7	41.6	40.8	39.6	33

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Marijuana	27.4	20.1	23	23.1	24.9	23.2	24.5
Heroin	1.5	0.6	0.6	0.9	1.3	1.2	1.4
Other	14.1	9.8	11.8	12	12.9	11.2	11.7

NUMBER OF USA CIGAR INITIATES (1,000's) AGE-SPECIFIC RATES

YEAR	All Ages	Under 18	Over 18	Average	AGE 12-17	AGE 18-25
1965	734	267	467	21	23.2	55.6
1966	1,195	714	480	17.2	65.5	76
1967	1,023	472	551	18.7	41.1	74.4
1968	1,088	350	738	20	31.5	94.5
1969	1,319	590	729	18.9	45.9	85
1970	880	323	557	19.9	25.3	61
1971	1,034	407	627	18.6	32.5	71.8
1972	1,490	526	964	19.5	41.9	101.4
1973	1,177	422	755	18.7	33.9	91.2
1974	1,114	474	640	19.7	33.9	58.7
1975	1,228	527	701	18.3	43.5	69.2
1976	1,320	480	840	19.9	39	69.4
1977	1,091	345	746	20.9	27.3	62.9
1978	1,274	473	801	19.2	37	69.3
1979	1,042	372	671	19.1	28.3	57.6
1980	1,152	355	796	20.7	28	66
1981	1,117	324	793	21.1	25.6	56.2
1982	1,434	354	1,080	22.2	28.4	78.4
1983	942	248	693	21.6	21.7	47.7
1984	1,123	311	812	20.4	27	67
1985	858	343	515	18.9	28.4	40.6
1986	1,054	338	716	20.8	29	47.3
1987	1,191	278	913	22	24	62
1988	1,262	329	933	20.7	29.6	68.1
1989	1,520	327	1,193	24.1	29.7	67.6
1990	1,217	258	959	21.7	23.6	68.8
1991	1,193	355	838	20.6	31.9	63.3
1992	1,424	427	997	21.2	38	67.2
1993	1,539	465	1,074	22.6	43.7	74.5
1994	1,636	575	1,061	21.7	50.7	67.9
1995	1,867	738	1,129	20.3	64.3	95.3
1996	2,164	798	1,365	21	66.4	117.6
1997	2,265	849	1,415	21.8	76	112.8
1998	2,135	1,016	1,118	20.1	89.6	103.1
1999	1,998	952	1,047	20.2	88.8	100.3
2000	2,093	999	1,094	20.2	94.3	108.6
2001	1,836	972	864	19.9	94.3	93.4
Total	50,029.0	18,353.0	31,672.0	753.4	1,582.8	2,771.7

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NUMBER OF USA MEN BEGAN DAILY SMOKING (1,000's)

Year	All Ages	Under 18	Over 18	Average	Age 12-17	Age 18-25
1965	728	319	408	18.7	31.9	74
1966	1,174	764	410	16.6	74.2	74.8
1967	1,139	596	542	17.6	54.4	98.5
1968	955	517	438	17.1	45.3	76.6
1969	1,108	780	327	16.6	66.4	53.7
1970	971	505	466	17.2	43	70.2
1971	1,034	554	479	17.7	46.8	64.9
1972	1,273	705	568	16.9	60.4	75.1
1973	994	590	404	16.5	47.1	51.3
1974	999	598	401	17.1	49.3	46
1975	1,236	703	533	17.2	59.7	57.6
1976	1,028	527	501	17.7	42.4	48.1
1977	1,022	579	444	17.5	47.7	44.4
1978	1,020	552	468	17.3	46.1	45
1979	810	461	349	17.4	39.9	33.4
1980	894	564	329	16.7	48.5	32.3
1981	812	424	388	17.5	35.5	35.9
1982	828	498	330	17.5	41.8	27.7
1983	836	409	427	18.2	36.1	34.1
1984	791	405	386	18	35.1	33.5
1985	821	548	273	17	46.9	23.1
1986	708	364	344	18.1	32.2	28.7
1987	793	434	359	17.2	39.7	30.8
1988	762	385	377	17.7	35.8	32
1989	678	270	408	18.3	24	34.6
1990	920	389	531	19.3	38.3	39.3
1991	825	356	469	18.1	35.1	38.9
1992	851	416	436	18	41.2	37.1
1993	755	387	368	17.7	35.3	30.2
1994	893	466	428	18.1	42.1	36.9
1995	790	446	344	17.9	40.1	29.3
1996	1,021	516	505	19.1	43.8	37.8
1997	1,062	563	500	18.1	47.8	44.7
1998	1,086	570	516	18.1	48.8	50.1
1999	926	556	369	16.9	48.9	39.7
2000	966	558	408	18.1	47.7	34.3
2001	726	406	321	18.5	35	28.7
Total	<u>34,235.0</u>	<u>18,680.0</u>	<u>15,554.0</u>	<u>653.2</u>	<u>1,634.3</u>	<u>1,673.3</u>

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USA - Smoking status	14–19	20–29	30–39	40–49	50–59	60+	All Ages
US MALES							
Daily	14.1	28.5	27.3	23.6	20.3	10.2	21.1
Weekly	2.7	3.3	2.8	1.3	1.2	0.7	2
Less than weekly	3.4	5.1	2.8	2.3	1.7	0.6	2.6
Ex-smokers(a)	4	12.4	21.8	33.9	44.2	53	29.6
Never smoked(b)	75.9	50.7	45.4	38.9	32.5	35.5	44.7
US FEMALE							
Daily	16.2	23.7	24.3	20.8	16.1	7.8	18
Weekly	2	2.3	1.7	1.1	0.7	0.2	1.3
Less than weekly	2.4	3.2	1.8	1.2	0.8	0.3	1.5
Ex-smokers(a)	4.7	17.1	25.6	29	26	26.6	22.9
Never smoked(b)	74.7	53.7	46.7	47.8	56.4	65.2	56.4
EVERYBODY							
Daily	15.1	26.1	25.7	22.2	18.2	8.9	19.5
Weekly	2.3	2.8	2.2	1.2	1	0.4	1.6
Less than weekly	2.9	4.1	2.3	1.8	1.2	0.4	2
Ex-smokers(a)	4.4	14.7	23.7	31.5	35.3	38.7	26.2
Never smoked(b)	75.3	52.2	46.1	43.3	44.3	51.6	50.6

ALCOHOL AND THE SCRIPTURES

NUMBER OF USA MALE CIGARETTE INITIATES (1,000s)

Year	All Ages	Under 18	Over 18	Average	Age 12-17	Age 18-25
1965	1,663	1,402	261	14.3	159.4	113
1966	1,569	1,219	350	14.7	150.2	141.8
1967	1,818	1,470	349	14.5	168.2	148.6
1968	1,667	1,373	294	14.5	154	114.7
1969	1,773	1,409	365	15	159.6	139.5
1970	1,824	1,597	227	14.1	166.6	82.8
1971	1,534	1,288	246	14.4	135.8	77.9
1972	1,669	1,413	257	14.2	147.3	81.7
1973	1,633	1,340	293	14.5	136.9	88.7
1974	1,685	1,354	330	14.5	144.5	93.1
1975	1,875	1,565	310	14.9	168.4	69.3
1976	1,825	1,505	320	14.9	172.1	73.4
1977	1,586	1,375	211	14	147	50.7
1978	1,624	1,359	265	14.5	150.4	61.7
1979	1,410	1,104	306	14.6	110.6	66.8
1980	1,285	990	294	15.2	102.4	58.6
1981	1,423	982	441	15.7	103.2	96.2
1982	1,325	1,100	224	15.3	120.8	45.6
1983	1,469	1,086	382	15.1	116.2	82
1984	1,459	1,150	308	15	120.2	61.1
1985	1,516	1,238	277	15.1	138.4	57.3
1986	1,399	1,127	272	14.9	114.2	54.4
1987	1,380	1,023	357	15.6	114.9	70.1
1988	1,406	1,028	378	15.5	113.6	74.1
1989	1,541	1,062	479	16.1	125.5	96.3
1990	1,282	1,001	282	15.4	118.2	49.6
1991	1,291	895	396	15.1	96.6	78.9
1992	1,459	958	501	15.6	103.4	92
1993	1,613	1,185	428	15.2	131.5	87.6
1994	1,660	1,228	432	15.2	128.3	85
1995	1,717	1,318	399	15.3	141.8	78.2
1996	1,820	1,438	382	15	152.1	84.5
1997	1,844	1,353	490	15.7	143.7	102.5
1998	1,725	1,332	393	15.5	143.5	89.8
1999	1,695	1,305	391	15.5	148.6	93.9
2000	1,477	1,147	330	15.4	134.6	79.8
<u>Total</u>	<u>56,941</u>	<u>44,719</u>	<u>12,220</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>4,883</u>	<u>3,021</u>

ALCOHOL AND THE SCRIPTURES

NUMBER OF USA FEMALE DAILY SMOKING INITIATES (1,000's)

<u>Year</u>	<u>All Ages</u>	<u>Under 18</u>	<u>Over 18</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Age 12-17</u>	<u>Age 18-25</u>
1965	751	373	378	18.2	33.7	44.8
1966	654	184	470	19.3	15.2	54.7
1967	654	389	266	17.1	33.4	29.2
1968	796	290	506	19.9	23.9	43.9
1969	933	413	520	17.7	31.2	51
1970	780	390	390	18.1	31.8	32.7
1971	782	361	421	17.8	29.4	37.9
1972	967	450	518	18.1	35.9	46.5
1973	1,017	569	448	17.9	44.3	32.6
1974	1,056	611	445	17.4	46	37.3
1975	1,113	637	477	17.7	49.3	37.4
1976	1,078	590	488	18.6	47.3	34.2
1977	1,045	569	476	18.4	45.6	33.3
1978	1,120	564	556	19.6	45.8	37.4
1979	1,095	560	535	18.5	45	36.1
1980	1,118	445	673	18.9	35.1	47
1981	1,117	536	580	19	45.6	37.9
1982	976	565	411	18	48	30.2
1983	850	392	458	19.3	33	31.2
1984	683	373	310	17.9	33.4	22.3
1985	760	419	340	17.6	37.6	27.3
1986	784	481	303	18.3	42.5	20.2
1987	557	274	282	18.2	22.3	19.3
1988	699	292	407	19.6	26	27.6
1989	640	338	302	18.7	29.5	21.7
1990	819	446	373	19.2	41.5	23.3
1991	857	364	493	20.6	34.3	28.7
1992	799	396	403	19.1	37.4	28.1
1993	645	367	278	17.8	34.1	21.9
1994	845	454	391	17.3	41.3	33.5
1995	917	507	409	18	45.7	32.9
1996	1,033	576	457	18.9	51.1	31.4
1997	905	543	362	17.4	48.7	31.6
1998	985	560	425	18.1	50.6	33.4
1999	961	547	414	19.2	49.4	30.8
2000	927	549	378	17.6	49.1	34.9
2001	708	351	357	20.4	32	24.8
<u>Total</u>	<u>32,426.0</u>	<u>16,725.0</u>	<u>15,700.0</u>	<u>683.4</u>	<u>1,426.0</u>	<u>1,229.0</u>

ALCOHOL AND THE SCRIPTURES

NUMBER OF USA FEMALE CIGARETTE INITIATES (1,000's)

<u>Year</u>	<u>All Ages</u>	<u>Under 18</u>	<u>Over 18</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Age 12-17</u>	<u>Age 18-25</u>
1965	1,233	840	393	15.7	79.2	93.1
1966	1,253	789	464	16.8	76.8	79.6
1967	1,528	1,104	424	16.2	107.9	69.7
1968	1,629	1,001	628	16.6	92.9	100
1969	1,448	1,148	300	15.3	108.9	50.8
1970	1,731	1,210	521	15.8	110.3	86.1
1971	1,809	1,271	538	16.1	111.8	89
1972	1,980	1,549	430	15	131.5	72.7
1973	1,803	1,357	446	15.3	127.4	70.5
1974	1,981	1,443	538	15.6	132.3	85
1975	1,730	1,306	424	15.2	124.5	67.2
1976	1,875	1,350	524	15.7	124.7	78.9
1977	1,503	1,081	422	16.1	110.3	63.8
1978	1,903	1,464	440	16	144.4	61.1
1979	1,748	1,383	365	15.2	132.4	55.2
1980	1,736	1,210	526	16	127.4	76.8
1981	1,508	1,113	395	15.5	117.3	62.1
1982	1,405	1,020	384	16	107.4	55.8
1983	1,460	1,107	353	17.1	117.1	44.4
1984	1,111	862	249	15.6	93	41.2
1985	1,367	1,026	341	15.5	110.1	56.6
1986	1,158	891	266	15.8	90.1	39.7
1987	1,223	886	336	15.5	88	50.9
1988	1,411	924	486	16.1	94.7	75.1
1989	1,359	963	397	16.4	99.2	53.6
1990	1,345	924	420	17	100.3	53.5
1991	1,347	1,003	343	15.7	106.7	49.3
1992	1,424	1,078	346	16.1	120	45.1
1993	1,566	1,154	412	15.5	122.4	60.9
1994	1,498	1,142	356	15.3	120.7	52.2
1995	1,645	1,139	507	15.9	118.7	79.6
1996	1,732	1,328	405	15.5	139.6	60.6
1997	1,656	1,270	387	15.2	137	66
1998	1,664	1,327	337	15.1	144.2	57.3
1999	1,592	1,177	415	16.2	136	70.6
2000	1,486	1,069	417	16.5	127	69.5
<u>Total</u>	<u>55,847</u>	<u>40,909</u>	<u>14,935</u>	<u>570</u>	<u>4,132</u>	<u>2,344</u>

ALCOHOL AND THE SCRIPTURES

NUMBER OF USA FEMALE ALCOHOL INITIATES (1,000's)

Year	All Ages	Under 18	Over 18	Average	Age 12-17	Age 18-25
1965	1,640	798	842	18.2	71.4	176.5
1966	1,538	631	907	18.2	56.1	192.4
1967	1,756	800	956	17.5	72	181.1
1968	2,056	950	1,106	18	84	199.6
1969	1,846	789	1,058	17.9	66.2	217.9
1970	1,996	993	1,003	18.2	84.7	199.1
1971	1,947	1,141	806	17	97.4	170.4
1972	2,235	1,183	1,051	17.7	100.4	217.1
1973	2,344	1,300	1,044	17.3	112.8	217.2
1974	2,116	1,254	862	18.1	112.9	168.6
1975	2,112	1,120	992	18.4	95.5	185.1
1976	1,987	1,179	808	18.3	102.4	148.8
1977	2,515	1,552	964	17.5	137.6	195.1
1978	2,192	1,443	749	17.1	132.6	160.7
1979	2,195	1,240	954	17.2	116.7	214.4
1980	2,147	1,273	874	18	122.9	174
1981	2,290	1,300	990	17.6	129.1	222.6
1982	1,937	1,209	728	17.3	122.4	168.6
1983	1,795	1,021	775	17.1	101.3	183.7
1984	1,820	1,179	641	17.2	123.1	147.1
1985	1,752	985	767	18.6	102.1	166.1
1986	1,908	1,280	628	16.6	135.6	149.7
1987	1,624	1,051	573	16.8	112.5	130.7
1988	1,695	1,001	694	17.3	108.2	154.5
1989	1,843	1,154	689	17.2	124.6	155.6
1990	1,746	1,061	685	17.9	118	147.5
1991	1,790	996	795	17.7	109.4	178.2
1992	1,725	972	752	17.5	107.8	177.8
1993	1,786	1,131	655	17	125	162
1994	1,962	1,249	713	16.7	137.2	184.5
1995	1,829	1,130	699	16.6	121.2	196.6
1996	1,849	1,205	645	16.9	126.6	166.5
1997	2,068	1,382	686	16.9	147.2	188.1
1998	2,121	1,367	754	17.6	149.1	189.4
1999	2,274	1,572	702	16.3	173.3	206.7
2000	2,912	2,046	866	16.6	244.6	283.1
<u>Total</u>	<u>71,348</u>	<u>41,937</u>	<u>29,413</u>	<u>628</u>	<u>4,184</u>	<u>6,577</u>

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7. John 8:34.
8. Reported in the "Living Parent," by Wilfred Winterton.
9. See page 8.
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11. See also, Isaiah 5:11, 22; 22:13; 28:1, 7, 8; 56:12; Joel 1:5; Amos 6:6, etc.
12. See p. 22, Note on Ezekiel.
13. See "tirosh" as "a blessing" in the Appendix.
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30. Leaven is Modern English; “Ferment” from Latin fermentum.
31. Cf. page 4, Section A., and page 23.
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33. So called in Genesis 49:11.
34. See page 29.
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