



The Bible and “Social” Drinking

William Dawson Jeffcoat



**Publishing Designs, Inc.
Huntsville, Alabama**





Publishing Designs, Inc.
P.O. Box 3241
Huntsville, Alabama 35810

© 2006 William Dawson Jeffcoat

Reprint of 1987 edition
(Note: Statistics are based on 1987 data)

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted without written permission from Publishing Designs, Inc., except for the inclusion of short quotations in a review.



All biblical references in this book are from the American Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.



Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Jeffcoat, William Dawson, 1929-
The Bible and social drinking / William Dawson Jeffcoat.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-929540-54-9 (alk. paper)
1. Drinking of alcoholic beverages—Religious aspects. 2.
Temperance—Biblical teaching. I. Title.
HV5180.J44 2006
361.8'32292—dc22
2005034093

Printed in the United States





To my wonderful wife,
Betty Wheeler Jeffcoat

*who has sacrificed much
that I may preach the gospel,
who is a devoted companion,
and dedicated mother in every sense
to our three daughters,
who wields a Christian influence
in public life and in private life,
who is committed to
the doctrine of Jesus Christ,
and without whose encouragement
this effort would have been more difficult,
this book is affectionately dedicated.*





TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION	3
PREFACE	10
ACKNOWLEDGMENT	11
PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS	13
Statement of the Problem	13
Importance of the Problem	14
Laws of God	14
Effects upon Society	14
Definitions and Classifications of the Problem	15
Definitions	15
Classifications	18
Limitations and Presuppositions of the Problem	23
Limitations	23
Presuppositions	24
Methodology of the Problem	24

PART ONE NEGATIVE ARGUMENTATION OF THE PROBLEM

1. MAJOR NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS	26
Definition of Wine Argument	26
External Evidence	26
Internal Evidence	27



No Prevention Argument	42
Essential Properties	42
Gluten Separation	43
Moisture Removal	44
Air Exclusion	45
Reduced Temperature	45
Sulphur Fumigation	46
Summary	46
Caná Argument	47
The Claim	47
Nature of the Miracle	48
Self-Contradictory Theory	49
Key Phrase	53
Good Wine	55
Object of the Miracle	58
 2. MISCELLANEOUS NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS	 60
Scriptural Injunction Argument	60
Ephesians 5:18	61
Luke 21:34	62
Evil Practices Denounced	62
Parallel Examples	62
The Teaching of Jesus	63
Commendation Argument	64
New Wine	64
Preservation of Unfermented Juice	65
Luke 5:39	65
Luke 7:31–35	67
The Good Samaritan	72
General Arguments	72
Noah and Lot	72
Numbers 28:7	72
Judges 9:13	74
Matthew 15:11	74
Matthew, Mark, and John	74
Acts 2:13	79
1 Corinthians 6:19–20	80
Galatians 2:4; 5:1	81
Colossians 2:16–17	82
1 Timothy 3:3, 8; Titus 1:7; 2:3	84
1 Timothy 4:4	87



1 Timothy 5:23	88
Infinitesimal Amounts	89
Alcoholic Beverages, Distilled and Fermented	90
Alcohol and Covetousness	90
Alcohol and Gluttony	91
Promotion of Alcoholic Sales	91
Alcohol and Food Value	92

PART TWO

AFFIRMATIVE ARGUMENTATION OF THE PROBLEM

3. MAJOR AFFIRMATIVE ARGUMENTS	98
Degree Argument	98
Deductive Reasoning	98
Terms Defined	99
Stages of Drunkenness	99
The Bible	106
Medical Science	107
Drunkenness	110
The Implication	115
Physical Effects Argument	115
A <i>Modus Ponens</i> Statement	116
Toxic Effects	116
Evidence Examined	118
The Proposition Proved	130
Influence Argument	130
Romans 14:21	130
Christian Influence	130
Christian Expediency	131
Christian Restraint	133
Christian Homes	134
Christian Examples	138
An Additional Observation	138
Situation Ethics	140
4. MISCELLANEOUS AFFIRMATIVE ARGUMENTS	143
Implicit Authority Argument	143
Law of Self-Denial	144



Law of the Avoidance of Temptation	146
Law of Love	147
Law of Perfection	150
Paradoxical Argument	151
Claims	152
Book of Revelation	153
General Arguments	154
Comparison of Alcoholic Beverages	154
The Tabernacle	158
Proverbs 23:31–32 and Habakkuk 2:15	159
Injunctions to Sobriety	159
Social Acceptance and Anxiety	162
CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS	164
Magnitude of the Problem	164
Crime	165
A National Problem	166
International Comparisons	168
Social and Cultural Considerations	169
Sex	170
Age	170
Ethnic Background	172
Religious Affiliation	173
Prohibition	174
Deceptiveness of Ethyl Alcohol	176
Crisis of the Home	177
Contributing Factors	177
Parental Responsibility	178
History of Drugs	178
Christian Instruction	179
Cause of Suffering	180
Examples of Suffering	180
A Marriage	180
An Employee	182
A Son	183
Which of These Would You Desire to Be?	184
A Personal Acquaintance	185
Proper Use of Things	191
Answer to the Problem	191
A Final Plea	192





PREFACE

Because of the multiple complex and contradictory theories within the ranks of modern society relative to ethyl alcohol, and “social” drinking in particular, virtually any discussion will arouse emotions and evoke heated disagreements. Yet the issue is of such profound significance that it must be removed from the realm of emotion and propaganda and viewed from a realistic and factual level.

This book has been designed with this purpose in mind. Not all persons, however, will agree with the views expressed. The only consideration asked, therefore, is that persons examine the arguments which have been advanced, in the light of biblical precepts and principles, and govern themselves accordingly.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to brother Thomas B. Warren for his sound advice and wise counsel in suggesting the form which this book should follow. If there are any mistakes in the material, however, the writer accepts complete responsibility for the same.

This book was originally undertaken as a guided research project, and was presented in May 1978 to brother Warren in Harding Graduate School of Religion in Memphis, Tennessee, as a requirement in Philosophy of Religion and Apologetics. Since the culmination of that work, however, the writer has considerably expanded the material to that of the present length.





*“Wine is a mocker,
strong drink a brawler;
and whosoever erreth thereby is not wise.”
(Proverbs 20:1)*





PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

Statement of the Problem

The problem to be discussed in this book is whether or not the Bible, the word of God, sanctions “social” drinking or “moderate” non-medicinal consumption of alcoholic beverages.¹ This subject has evoked frequent discussions and differences of opinion through the years. The view is held by many persons that such activities constitute matters of mere personal preference. It is claimed that it is neither enjoined nor prohibited in the Bible and that, therefore, it is without inherent moral quality and may be innocently engaged in without fear of wrongdoing.

The theory has been advanced that Jesus made and imbibed alcoholic beverages. His enemies have insisted upon it, that they might reflect disgrace upon His character and discredit upon His cause. Those who imbibe such beverages have affirmed it, that, under the protection of Jesus’ example, they might escape condemnation. Some of His most sincere and conscientious advocates have felt themselves compelled to admit the charge, and, without pleading His practice as a rule to follow, have attempted His defense. Others, many of whom perhaps are no less sincere or conscientious, have claimed that no defense is necessary, but that Jesus’ example as a “moderate” imbibor may be imitated.

The charge that the Bible sanctions such views is false. In the purview of this book evidence shall be introduced to refute the claims and establish

1. Such terms as “social” drinking, “moderate,” and “moderation,” are placed within quotation marks because the writer views them as inappropriate in regard to the issue.



the fact that the imbibing of ethyl alcohol as a beverage in any form and to any degree is sinful. Often such abstention is referred to as total abstinence. It should be observed however that the adjective “total” in the phrase “total abstinence” is a superfluous term. Since abstinence or abstention involves doing without, giving up or refraining, to so do is to act entirely, wholly, completely or totally.

Importance of the Problem

Laws of God

The problem is important because the consumption of alcoholic beverages is contrary to the laws of God, which are revealed in the Bible. Although the modern world is rapidly casting aside all restraints and rejecting the righteous principles of God, the Bible provides ample proof that His laws cannot be rejected without punishment. Acts are morally right if they are in agreement with the laws of God, and they are morally wrong if they are contrary to or inconsistent with His laws. God imposes certain moral restrictions on all accountable person, and, in order to be righteous, they must obey His laws. The laws of God, which inhibit, also protect humanity, and without rational thinking there can be no respect for such laws. Persons under the influence of alcoholic beverages render themselves incapable of rational thinking. The significance of the problem therefore can be seen from the fact that such persons render themselves incapable of having respect for the laws of God. Although they violated His laws in taking the first drink, they continue to so do in willfully rendering themselves incapable of having respect for His laws.

Effects Upon Society

The problem is important because of its effects upon society. The true import may be discerned by a careful analysis of the physical, social, and economic problems of extreme proportions which have resulted from the consumption of alcoholic beverages. Although such consumption has caused multiple problems in the United States since its beginning, there have been notable proliferations in the last half century. Formerly, most imbibing took place in saloons or taverns and not in the home. Imbibing



in any form and to any degree before the general public was uncommon. With the aid of skillful and subtle advertising by the alcoholic beverage industry, however, this has changed. In fact, our ultra-permissive society has largely accepted “social” drinking as a normal way of life. The 1974 Gallup survey of adults in the United States, eighteen and older, indicates that 68 percent imbibe alcoholic beverages.¹ This represents an increase of 6 percent from their previous survey in 1969.

In 1974, Dr. Morris E. Chafetz, chairman of a government task force investigating alcohol and health, stated, “Most Americans drink. Drinking is learned mostly at home or from adolescent peers. Being a drinker, rather than an abstainer, is thus an American norm.”²

Definitions and Classifications of the Problem

Definitions

Alcohol

The physiologically active ingredient of intoxicating beverages is, of course, alcohol. Although a large quantity of industrial alcohol is now manufactured synthetically from various petroleum products, that which is in all alcoholic beverages is made by fermentation of sugar with yeast.

The term is derived from an Arabic word, *kuhl* or *kuhol*, which is indicative of a fine powder. In early usage the term was often descriptive of that which was used as a cosmetic for darkening the eyelids. Later the term came to mean “essence.” A physician and alchemist from Switzerland, Paracelsus,³ used the term to refer to the essence of wine, or *alcool vini*. The Latin term *vini*, for wine, was dropped in the early nineteenth century with the term being used to designate wine spirits.

There are numerous misconceptions relative to the agents and effect of alcoholic beverages. The term “alcohol” is applied by chemists to a group of liquids which contain the elements carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen combined in a way which differentiates them from other substances containing these same elements. There are many kinds of alcohol

1. “The Rising Number of Drinkers,” *Washington Post*, 10 June 1974, p. B2.

2. *Second Special Report to the U.S. Congress on Alcohol and Health*, by Morris E. Chafetz, Chairman (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1974), p. 1.

3. A.D. 1493–1541.



including amyl, butyl, ethyl, methyl, and propyl, some of which are classified by various types.¹ Ethyl alcohol, the main agent in alcoholic beverages, is often referred to as grain alcohol or ethanol.

Methyl alcohol or methanol, most frequently referred to as wood alcohol, and which is used as a solvent and in automotive antifreeze, is also used. As a violent poison, it has often led to blindness or death when used as an ingredient in illicit liquor.²

The federal government classifies ethyl alcohol as a drug,³ and Dr. Frank Overton refers to it as a “narcotic drug.”⁴ Scientists classify drugs as (1) sedatives, (2) analgesics, and (3) anesthetics. Ethyl alcohol can act as a sedative in small amounts, and as an analgesic in even smaller quantities, with its most characteristic effect being that of an anesthetic.⁵

In defining ethyl alcohol and its action, Raymond G. McCarthy states,

Alcohol is classified pharmacologically as an anesthetic. The predominant characteristic of an anesthetic is a progressive descending depression of the central nervous system. In varying dosages, alcohol may act as an analgesic, a soporific, as anesthetic, a narcotic, or a hypnotic.⁶

It is the main drug affect of this most active element which leads persons to imbibe such beverages.⁷ According to a leading authority, persons do not drink in order to produce an impairment in cortical

-
1. There are eight types of amyl alcohol, four types of butyl alcohol or butanol, and two types of propyl alcohol.
 2. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1959 ed., s.v. “Methyl Alcohol,” by Donald Guyer Zink, p. 362.
 3. *Alcohol: Some Questions and Answers* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1981), p. 3.
 4. Frank Overton, *Applied Physiology Including the Effects of Alcohol and Narcotics* (New York: American Book Co., n.d.), p. 140.
 5. John S. Sinacore, *Health, a Quality of Life*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan Co., 1974), p. 323.
 6. Raymond Gerald McCarthy, ed. *Drinking and Intoxication* (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1959), p. 26.
 7. Raymond Gerald McCarthy and Edgar M. Douglass, *Alcohol and Social Responsibility: A New Educational Approach* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1949), p. 88



function or to reduce their critical faculty; they drink in order to feel differently.¹

Although ethyl alcohol is the chief agent in producing intoxication, persons do not imbibe pure ethyl alcohol. It is always consumed, however, as an agent in wine, brewed beverages, or distilled spirits. The other elements which are present in, or added to, alcoholic beverages contribute only flavor, aroma, and color to a major degree. The effects of impurities or other contents are of far less importance than the effects of ethyl alcohol which is always present.

Poison

The dominant action of ethyl alcohol when brought into contact with the tissues of the human body is similar to that of other substances which because of their power to injure are referred to as poisons. *Poison* is defined as “a substance that through its chemical action usually kills, injures, or impairs an organism; something destructive or harmful.”² Professor of Chemistry, W. Lee Lewis said,

Toxic means poison, and to intoxicate means to poison. An intoxicating drink is a poisonous drink. Therefore, when a man is (or was) intoxicated he is (or was) poisoned. Not all persons die who are poisoned as it depends upon the extent of the intoxication. Some poisons are instantly fatal, others slower, and still others only cumulatively so.³

According to Drs. W. H. Willcox and John Glaister, poisons may be classified in various ways, involving their chemical composition, their action on the body, and their physical characters. Included among these

-
1. P. Schilder, *Psychoanalysis, Man and Society* (New York: Norton, 1951), n.p., quoted in Edith S. Lisansky, “The Psychological Effects of Alcohol,” in *Alcohol Education for Classroom and Community*, ed. Raymond Gerald McCarthy (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964), p. 116.
 2. “Poison,” in *Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*, ed. Henry Bosley Woolf (Springfield, Mass.: G. and C. Merriam Co., 1973), p. 888.
 3. Emma L. Benedict Transeau, *Effects of Alcoholic Drinks* (Boston: Scientific Temperance Federation, 1938), p. 3.



are irritant poisons, gaseous poisons, corrosive poisons, and systemic poisons, the latter of which includes alcohol.¹

Drs. Maurice Victor and Raymond D. Adams have stated that distilled spirits contain enanthic ethers, which give the flavor but have no important pharmacologic properties, and impurities such as amyl alcohol (fusel oil) and acetaldehyde, which act like alcohol but are more toxic.² Professor John J. Abel, after an exhaustive study of all the reported impurities found in alcoholic beverages at the time of his investigation summarized his results by stating, "Ethyl alcohol alone is poisonous enough to account for all of the evils of alcoholism."³

Classifications

For a better understanding of alcoholic beverages it is necessary to know the forms in which ethyl alcohol is used. Such beverages are usually classified according to the materials from which they are made and the processes by which they are prepared. The two basic classes are (1) fermented and (2) distilled.

Fermented

Most of the alcohol employed today is made by the process of fermentation. Alcohol by this means results only when some fruit, vegetable, cereal, or grain juice spoils, decays, or rots. Alcohol can never be produced when the substance is in a wholesome condition. Scientists have discovered that fruit or vegetable juices which contain sugar, or

-
1. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1959 ed., s.v. "Poison," by William Henry Wilcox and John Glaister, pp. 119–20. Dr. Wilcox was lecturer on Chemical Pathology and on Forensic Medicine in St. Mary's Hospital in London, England, for thirty-five years. Dr. Glaister is Regius Professor of Forensic Medicine, in the University of Glasgow, in Glasgow, Scotland.
 2. Maurice Victor and Raymond D. Adams, "Alcohol," in *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine*, eds. Maxwell M. Wintrobe et al. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1970), p. 668. Dr. Victor is Professor of Neurology, Western Reserve University School of Medicine; Chief, Neurology Service, Cleveland Metropolitan General Hospital. Dr. Adams is Bullard Professor of Neuropathology, Harvard Medical School; Chief of Neurology Service and Neuropathologist, Massachusetts General Hospital.
 3. Emma L. Benedict Transeau, p. 17, quoting John J. Abel, *Physiological Aspects of the Liquor Problem*, vol. 2.



starch which changes to sugar when exposed to the air at a temperature of from forty-five degrees to seventy-five degrees Fahrenheit, practically always results in alcoholic fermentation.¹ Such fermentation is referred to as vinous fermentation.

Other kinds of fermentation or decomposition are caused by other germs; for example, sour milk is lactic acid fermentation; vinegar is acetic acid fermentation; mold on bread or cheese indicates a kind of putrefaction called fermentation.

The fermented beverages are subdivided according to the material used, into two principal kinds: (1) Those obtained from plant and fruit juices, the chief of which are wine and cider, and (2) those obtained from grain, the chief of which are beer and ale. As the grains have to be put through a process of malting before a fermentable liquid can be obtained, the resulting beverages are referred to as malt liquors.

Beverages from Plant and Fruit Juices

Vinous liquors or wines are made by the fermentation of the sugar in fruits, which produces alcohol and carbonic gas. Therefore the amount of alcohol produced by vinous fermentation depends chiefly upon the amount of sugar in the liquid allowed to ferment. The fresh juice of ripe grapes, for example, contains 15 to 30 percent sugar, which is made up or composed of about equal parts of glucose and fructose. If enough is present, the alcoholic strength may reach 12 to 14 percent. Wines stronger than 12 or 14 percent have been fortified by the addition of distilled liquors. In this regard, Wayne E. Oates stated,

The maximum amount of alcohol content is not much over 13 percent through the process of fermentation. However, wines may be “fortified” and thus contain more alcohol.²

Such additions increase the alcohol content of some wines, such as sherry, up to the level of 20 percent, and others to as much as 23 percent. It is

1. The starting material, which varies, may be molasses or starchy materials such as corn, wheat, or potato mashes. Since starch is not attacked directly by yeast it is necessary first to convert the starch to sugar by cooking under pressure, followed by the use of enzymes, which break down proteins and starches. Yeast is added after which fermentation takes place.
2. Wayne E. Oates, *Alcohol In and Out of the Church* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1966), p. 1.



quite correct to observe that champagne, for instance, is more intoxicating than numerous other wines.

Although wine by comparison is not as potent as is straight whiskey, it is certainly not as innocuous as some persons suppose. In fact, common table wine is approximately two to three times as potent as beer, while fortified wine is much stronger. In comparison, it represents virtually half as much ethyl alcohol as the same quantity of straight whiskey.

Cider is made by the same process. The term is also applied to unfermented juice, but when so used it is usually referred to as sweet cider. Often the term "hard cider" is employed for fermented juice, which is intoxicating. Wild yeast cells, which are in the air or which were on the surface of apples before they were crushed, act on the sugar of the juice by turning it into alcohol and carbonic gas. Alcohol thus formed is the same kind of alcohol as that in wine or other intoxicating beverages. The percentage of alcohol content depends upon the amount of sugar in the juice. If the process of fermentation is allowed to reach its limit, the cider will finally contain from 8 to 10 percent alcohol. The alcohol in hard cider has the same power to impair mental functions, to weaken self-control, and to lead to an increasing desire for more as has the alcohol in wine, beer, or whiskey.

Beverages from Grain

The presence of alcohol in beer and other malt liquors is also because of yeast, but the cultivated yeast used in brewing belongs to a slightly different species from that of the wild yeasts which produce wine and cider. Malt liquors are made by extracting starch from grains and vegetables, and malting them to change the starch to sugar, which is then fermented. The proportion of alcohol in fermented malt liquors varies from 3.5 percent in light beer to 9 percent in strong ale. There are exceptions however. A beer known as E-K-U 28 was imported into the United States from West Germany in 1980. Purported to be the strongest beer in the world, with an alcoholic content of 13.2 percent, persons have been known to have passed out after the consumption of three bottles.¹

Although ethyl alcohol is the principal intoxicating agent in beer, it is not the only one. Beer, in fact, contains a major property that is not found in various other alcoholic beverages. Hops, which are used in the

1. "Parade," *Nashville, The Tennessean*, 11 October 1981, p. 7.



brewing process, and which are derived from the same plant family as marijuana, have a part. The active agent in hops is a fine powder called lupulin, which dulls the senses in small doses and causes stupor or coma in larger amounts. In this sense it operates as a narcotic which is a medical term for any substance or class of drugs which induce sleep and stupor and relieve pain; opiates, anesthetics, and others are included. Some pharmacologists include barbiturates, although they do not relieve pain. From a legal viewpoint, opium, its alkaloids and derivatives are included; the cocoa leaf and its principal derivative, cocaine, and the plant *cannabis sativa* L., otherwise known as “marijuana.”¹

A narcotic is also scientifically defined as

a substance which when swallowed, inhaled, or injected into the system induces drowsiness, sleep, stupefaction, or insensibility, according to its strength and the amount taken.²

Pathologically speaking, narcosis is, “the production of a narcotic state; the operation or effects of narcotics upon the system; a state of insensibility.”³ Former Associate Biochemist, in the United States Department of Agriculture, Frank Rabak, indicates that lupulin, “a sticky, yellowish, granular powder,” is from the standpoint of brewing,

the most important substance because it contains the resins and volatile oil which imparts the characteristic bitter taste and aroma to beer.⁴

It is additionally said that from a botanical standpoint, lupulin is “the resinous yellow powder found under the scales of the calyx of the hop,” while chemically speaking, it is “the bitter principle obtained from this powder.”⁵ Two lupulic acids, humulone and lupulone, come from lupulin. One of these, humulone, has virtually the same chemical formula as cannabinol, the active principle of marijuana. A. H. Wright, Emeritus

1. Helen H. Nowlis, *Drugs on the College Campus* (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1969), p. 127. See also *Family Health Guide and Medical Encyclopedia*, 1970 ed., s.v. “Narcotic,” p. 742.

2. “Narcotic,” in *Oxford Universal Dictionary on Historical Principles*, 3rd ed., C. T. Onions (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1944), p. 1309.

3. Ibid., “Narcosis,” p. 1309.

4. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1959 ed., s.v. “Hop,” by Frank Rabak, pp. 734–35.

5. “Lupulin,” in *Oxford Universal Dictionary on Historical Principles*, p. 1178.



Professor of Agronomy in the University of Wisconsin, indicates that cannabinol is a narcotic.¹ Geraniol, a toxic chemical substance which comes from the hop oil in lupulin, is used chiefly in perfumes and soap.² In his work in regard to the effect of additives, Dr. Frank Overton also states that beer usually contains one or more chemical additives not only injurious but actually poisonous to the body.³ These include sodium hydrosulphite which is extensively employed in the dyeing of vat colors; gum arabic, a natural resin which is produced from sticky secretions from trees, and is used in the manufacture of adhesives;⁴ papain or papayotin, from the milky juice of papaya fruit, and an enzyme which greatly resembles pepsin in its digestive action,⁵ along with cobalt and tannic acid.

Although some persons feel that beer is a relatively harmless beverage, it is a well known fact that persons who drink beer compose a large percentage of alcoholics in various hospitals and clinics. It is equally true that all alcoholic beverages have primarily the same effects on the human body, with the only important difference being the amount of alcohol they contain. Any two beverages containing the same quantity of alcohol will produce virtually the same effect.

Distilled

The distillation of liquor increases alcohol content. Distillation is the process by which one part of a liquid is separated from another part, or one liquid is separated from another. The separation is caused by boiling and condensing the resulting vapor. Alcohol which is mixed with water will turn to vapor more rapidly than will the water because alcohol boils at a lower temperature than does water. When the vapor is again condensed, the liquid will contain a larger proportion of alcohol than the liquid in the container. It is possible to separate some of the water from most alcohol by the process of distillation, although propyl alcohol

1. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1959 ed., s.v. "Hemp," by A. H. Wright, p. 422.

2. "Geraniol," in *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, p. 482. See also *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1959 ed., s.v. "Perfumes," by William A. Poucher, p. 505.

3. Frank Overton, p. 43.

4. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1959 ed., s.v. "Resins," by Edward L. Kropa, p. 210A.

5. *Ibid.*, s.v. "Papaya," by William Popenoe, p. 229.



which occurs in fusel oil, an agent in distilled liquors, cannot be separated from water by distillation.¹

Whiskey, rum, brandy, and gin are so made, and usually carry an alcohol content of 47 to 54 percent. Whiskey is made from distilled malt liquors; rum is made from fermented molasses or sugar cane juice; brandy is made by distillation from fermented fruit juices; gin is made from roots and herbs which have been treated with alcohol.

In regard to ruin, the type of the compound formed by the reaction between acid and alcohol and other secondary components differ according to the numerous modifications and the method of manufacture. Raw materials may vary from fresh cane juice, to molasses, to even the soured scum and washings, as well as the residue remaining in the still from a prior distillation. According to a noted English chemist, John George Noel Gaskin, “rums may contain from 43 percent to 79 percent by volume of ethyl alcohol at importation.”²

There is thus a great difference between alcoholic beverages of the twentieth century and wines of the first century. Modern alcoholic beverages are far more potent than were the wines of the first century. In fact, not all wines of the first century were intoxicating, and those which were had not been fortified by additional alcohol.

Limitations and Presuppositions of the Problem

Limitations

The writer does not propose to explicate in this book every aspect of “social” drinking, including every refutation which might be advanced. It shall be limited to the introduction and elucidation of prime negative and affirmative arguments.

The word “social” in connection with drinking is used in the sense of imbibing non-medicinally light or small amounts of mind-altering or intoxicating alcoholic drinks as beverages. Thus, fermented wine for medicinal purposes or for the Lord’s Supper is not under consideration.³

1. Ibid., s.v. “Propyl Alcohols,” p. 591.

2. Ibid., s.v. “Rum,” by John George Noel Gaskin, p. 635.

3. Excellent statements relative to wine in the Lord’s supper were written by Henry Leo Boles, “The Kind of Wine in the Lord’s Supper,” *Gospel Advocate* 110 (17 October 1968): 664; J. W. Roberts, “What Kind of Element in the Cup on the Lord’s Day, Fermented or Unfermented?” *Firm Foundation* 81 (18 August 1964): 524, 532; and Guy N. Woods, *Questions and Answers Open Forum Freed-Hardeman College Lectures* (Nashville: Williams Printing Co., 1976), p. 362.



Although the writer neither believes that the Bible condemns its use nor requires such, neither is included in the term “beverage.”

Presuppositions

Presuppositions in this book include the views that (1) God exists as a rational being, and is infinite in all His attributes; (2) God created man in His image, exhibited an interest in man, and revealed His will to man; (3) man, who is lost because of sin, and as a rational being, is held accountable to the will of God; (4) God’s will is truth without which man cannot be saved; (5) God’s will is revealed in the Bible, which is inspired of God, essential, complete, inerrant, perpetually relevant, all-sufficient, and authoritative; (6) God will allow no additions to the Bible, no subtractions from it, and no modifications or perversions of it; (7) God authorizes through the Bible by direct statement, approved account of action, and by implication; (8) God has made it possible to ascertain that which is authorized by the Bible; (9) God has decreed a final judgment of man, with the Bible forming the basis of that judgment; and, (10) those who obey God will be saved in heaven, and those who disobey God will be lost in hell.

Methodology of the Problem

In the remainder of this book it will be shown that it is contrary to the will of God to imbibe ethyl alcohol as a beverage in any form and to any degree. The material will be presented in two parts. Part One, comprising negative argumentation of the problem, will consist of theories in favor of “social” drinking, followed by their refutation. Part Two, dealing with affirmative argumentation of the problem, will consist of arguments in opposition to “social” drinking, followed by Concluding Observations.

Part One will consist of two chapters involving major negative arguments and miscellaneous negative arguments. Part Two will contain two chapters discussing major affirmative arguments and miscellaneous affirmative arguments. Concluding Observations will contain graphic illustrations of the harmful effect of “social” drinking, and a plea for Christian concern for the will of God in this respect.



PART ONE

NEGATIVE ARGUMENTATION OF THE PROBLEM





1

MAJOR NEGATIVE ARGUMENTS

Definition of Wine Argument

This argument¹ involves the claim that in biblical times the term “wine,” without exception, indicated a fermented and thus intoxicating liquid.² By virtue of this view, it is further claimed that several passages in the Bible sanction “social” drinking. Such reasoning is without merit, as shall be proved by the presentation of external and internal evidence.

External Evidence

External evidence, which is defined as evidence gathered from outside the Bible, comes from both Roman and Greek writers of antiquity. These

-
1. It should be observed that the term “argument” logically described, involves a coherent reason or series of reasons given in proof or rebuttal of something. It refers to the basic unit of reasoning and is defined as a unit of discourse in which beliefs are supported by *reasons*. It therefore simply involves the action of *proving* something to indeed be the case, or true. In an argument the proposition or propositions that form the evidence for the inference are called the premise or premises, and the proposition to which the inference is made is called the conclusion. The person who presents the argument must be claiming that if certain things (the premises) are true, then, something else, (the conclusion) should be also true, and, he must be claiming that the premises are indeed true. There is an actual argument *when* and *only when* both these claims are present. In the framework of logic the law of rationality requires that persons draw *only* such conclusions as may be warranted by the *evidence*. On the contrary, an assertion is merely a statement with *no evidence* presented from which a conclusion may be warranted.
 2. “Wine,” in *People’s Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. Charles Randall Barnes (New York: Eaton and Maine, 1900), pp. 1176–77; Horace Bumstead, “The Biblical Sanction for Wine,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 38 (January 1881):115.



include Aristotle, Athenaeus, and Pliny, each of whom testify to the fact that unfermented wine existed in antiquity.¹

In an attempt to break the force of such evidence, the objection is made that it is only in a comparative sense, and not in an absolute sense, that the testimony of such writers as to the unintoxicating nature of various wines should be accepted.

It should be noted, however, that the much more potent fortified wines and distilled spirits of the twentieth century were unknown until relatively modern times.² The objection therefore is without validity.

The Greek term *oinos*, which is rendered “wine,” has been employed by ancient secular writers in several ways. (1) Anacreon, who wrote in 500 B.C., said, “Only males tread the grapes, setting free the wine (*oinos*).” (2) Varro spoke of “gathering wine.” (3) Cato referred to “hanging wine,” or grapes on the vine. (4) Columella spoke of “unintoxicating wine.” (5) Celsus said, “Gather the berries of the myrtle, and from them express wine.” (6) Ovid said, “And scarce can the grapes contain the wine they have within.” (7) Ibycus stated, “And newborn clusters teem with wine, beneath the shadowy foliage of the vine.”³ It can be seen, therefore, that during this early period, juice in the grape was referred to as wine. In fact, the Hebrew term *yayin* and the Greek term *oinos* were, as Professor Sir Richard Jebb said of *oinos*, general terms in those early days.

Internal Evidence

Internal evidence, which is defined as evidence gathered from inside the Bible, may be supplied in three ways. The Bible discriminates (1) by the contrasting ways in which it refers to wine, (2) by the terms which are employed to designate wine, and (3) by various descriptive phrases which are used.⁴

Contrasts

In one class of passages wine is commended, and in another class it is condemned, in each case in the strongest and most unmistakable language.

1. Aristotle, *Meteorologica* 4.9; Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 1. 27; 5199; Pliny, *Natural History* 14.11.

2. For the history of distillation see pp. 156–158.

3. Ferrar Fenton, “The Bible and Wine,” in *Paul’s Letters to Timothy and Titus*, ed. Don De Welt (Joplin, Missouri: College Press, 1961), p. 327.

4. All biblical references in this book are from the American Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.



It is contrasted as (1) a blessing and cursing,¹ (2) sanctioned and condemned,² (3) that which cheereth and is a mocker,³ (4) an emblem of spiritual blessing and of divine wrath,⁴ and (5) that which is allowed and interdicted.⁵

The natural inference is, therefore, that two distinct or different substances are designated by these totally diverse characterizations.

Terms

There are twenty-four or more distinct terms in the Bible, characterized by twenty-eight renderings, which either directly or indirectly have reference to wine.⁶

Old Testament

The Old Testament employs nineteen or more of these terms, with twenty-seven renderings.⁷ The definition and classification of each term will be discussed with special emphasis being given to the three most prominent terms: *yayin*, *tirosh*, and *shekar*.

Yayin. The term is employed 136 times, with four renderings. It is rendered “wine” 132 times, “wineskins” two times, and “wine cellars” and “banqueting” one time each.

Yayin is the first and most frequently used word for wine in the Old Testament, appearing in the earliest and in the latest history, from the time of Noah⁸ to that of Nehemiah.⁹ It is a generic term for “all sorts of wine,”¹⁰ new or old, unfermented or fermented. Although usually fermented, *yayin* was not always intoxicating, and in most instances in

1. Ps. 104:15; Hab. 2:15.

2. Jn. 2:1–11; Prov. 4:17.

3. Judg. 9:13; Prov. 20:1.

4. Is. 55:1; Ps. 60:3.

5. Deut. 7:13; Prov. 23:29–32.

6. For a complete listing of each term, see Appendix A, Table One, pp. 196–199.

7. Friedrich Heinrich Wilhelm Gesenius, *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament Scriptures*, trans. Samuel Prideau Tregelles (np., 1857; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957), pp. 347, 847, 863.

8. Gen. 9:21.

9. Neh. 13:15.

10. Neh. 5:18.



which it was used as a beverage, no doubt was but slightly alcoholic in content.¹

The term occurs twenty-one times in connection with *shekar*. Its root was probably *yavan* or *yanah*, the primary idea of both being that of turbidness, or boiling up, which is characteristic of grape juice as it passes into the vat.²

In some instances *yayin* specifies the blood of the grape which has been freshly expressed.³ By a natural extension of meaning, it gradually came to designate wine in all its subsequent stages, and even applied retrospectively to wine still confined in the cluster.⁴

In Numbers 6:4 *yayin* refers to the vine. In Deuteronomy 28:39 it is ranked among things to be sucked, gathered, or eaten. In Isaiah 16:10 it is used for the grapes to be trodden, while in Isaiah 55:1 it likely signifies thick grape syrup or honey.⁵ In Proverbs 9:2–5 *yayin* refers to a boiled wine, or syrup, the thickness of which rendered it necessary to mix with water before consumption.⁶ In several instances in the Septuagint,⁷ *yayin* is rendered *gleukos*.⁸ Denoting what the Greeks specified as *gleukos* or sweet wine, the term is employed by Flavius Josephus in referring to the grape juice expressed into Pharaoh's cup, in Genesis 40:11.⁹ In reference to the contents of Pharaoh's cup, the highly respected biblical commentator, Adam Clarke, stated,

1. "Wine," in *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, ed. Merrill Frederick Unger (Chicago: Moody Press, 1957), p. 1168; and "Wine," in *Fausset's Bible Dictionary*, ed. Andrew Robert Fausset (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975), p. 722.
2. Frederick R. Lees, "Wine," in *Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia and Scriptural Dictionary*, ed. Samuel Fallows (Chicago: Howard Severance Co., 1914), 3:1724.
3. Gen. 49:11.
4. Jer. 40:10.
5. cf. Is. 7:22.
6. Frederick R. Lees, "Wine," in *Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia and Scriptural Dictionary*, 3:1725.
7. It is thought that the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, was completed by some 70 or 72 scholars at Alexandria, Egypt, between 284–247 B.C. Most of the Septuagint, some of which was cited by Christ on occasion, has been preserved in copies of the original.
8. G. Abbott-Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921), p. 93.
9. Frederick R. Lees, "Wine," in *Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia and Scriptural Dictionary*, 3:1725.



From this we find that wine anciently was the mere expressed juice of the grape, without fermentation. The *saky*, or cup-bearer, took the bunch, pressed the juice into the cup, and instantly delivered it into the hands of his master. This was anciently the *yayin* of the Hebrews, the *oinos* of the Greeks, and the *mustum* of the ancient Latins.¹

Yayin is also connected with the Latin term *vinum* as well as with *oinos*, in which sense it is usually rendered in the Septuagint. From the foregoing description, therefore, it is observed that *yayin* does not always denote a fermented liquid with resulting intoxicating properties.

Tirosh. The term is employed thirty-eight times, with two renderings. It is rendered “new wine” thirty-six times and “vintage” two times.

Derived from the verb *yarash*, it means “to seize, or inherit, thus to possess.”² It is used of the vine, the fruit of the vineyard in its natural condition, as a possession. It is found “in the cluster,”³ gathered,⁴ put into “store-houses,”⁵ trodden,⁶ and that which shall “overflow” from the vats.⁷ It is spoken of as being poured out or drunk in only one instance.⁸ It is referred to as the most general term for vintage fruit or the produce of the field or what would most likely be known today as the orchard.⁹ Three words are employed in the Septuagint in regard to *tirosh*, namely, *oinos*, *rox*, and *methusma*.

In thirty instances *tirosh* is mentioned in connection with corn or *dagan*; in twenty-one instances it occurs with oil or *yitzhar*. Thus, the three terms form a triad of blessings: corn-fruit or the produce of the

1. Adam Clarke, *Genesis to Deuteronomy*, A Commentary and Critical Notes, vol. 1 (New York: T. Mason and G. Lane, 1837; reprint ed. New York: Abingdon Press, n.d.), p. 231.

2. Frederick R. Lees, “Wine,” in *A Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature*, ed. John Kitto (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, n.d.), 2:953.

3. Is. 65:8.

4. Deut. 11:14.

5. 2 Chron. 32:28.

6. Mic. 6:15.

7. Joel 2:24; Prov. 3:10.

8. Is. 62:9.

9. “Wine,” in *Fausset’s Bible Dictionary*, p. 722; and Frederick R. Lees, “Wine,” in *Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia and Scriptural Dictionary*, 3:1726.



field, vineyard, and orchard. A Hebrew parallelism, which illustrates the position that *tirosh* was used for grapes in their natural state, is found in Micah 6:15.

Thou shalt sow, but shalt not reap; thou shalt tread the olives, but shalt not anoint thee with oil; and the vintage, but shalt not drink the wine.

“Vintage” and “wine” in the text come from *tirosh* and *yayin* respectively. It may be seen, therefore, that *tirosh* was the natural source of *yayin*, as the olive was of the oil.

The term is constantly connected with the mention of conditions affecting the natural growth, such as drought¹ and dew.² It has a proleptical application to the juice while still in the grape, and by another figure to the grapes in the press.³

Tirosh is however a comprehensive term, applying both to the freshly expressed, unfermented juice of the grape, or *must*,⁴ and also to a light kind of wine which was made in antiquity by checking the process of fermentation before it had run its full course.⁵ In discussing the term in Isaiah 24:7, Albert Barnes stated that it denotes properly *must*, or wine that is newly expressed, and thus unfermented.⁶ It may be observed that other expositors hold the same view.⁷ That it also included the

1. Is. 24:7; Joel 1:10.

2. Gen. 27:28; Deut. 33:28.

3. Archibald Robert Stirling Kennedy, “Wine and Strong Drink,” in *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, eds. Thomas Kelly Cheyne and John Sutherland Black (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1903), 4:5307.

4. *Merith*, which corresponds etymologically in Syraic, is defined as new wine, or *must*, as it comes from the press.

5. *Must* was often used at once, being drunk fresh. To preserve in a sweet state, it was placed in an air-tight *amphora*, and deposited in a cool place, where it would keep for a whole year or more. It was also preserved by being boiled until it became a kind of jelly.

6. Albert Barnes, *Isaiah*, Notes on the Old Testament, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Gall and Inglis, 1945; reprint ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1950), p. 391.

7. “Wine,” in *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, p. 1168; Burton Scott Easton, “Wine,” in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, ed. James Orr (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1939), 5:3086; and G. Coleman Luck, “Wine,” in *Wycliffe Bible Dictionary*, eds. Charles F. Pfeiffer, Howard Frederic Vos, and John Rea (Chicago: Moody Press, 1975), 2:1812.



expressed juice is certain, for tithe was levied on *tirosh*;¹ but tithe, as follows from Deuteronomy 14:26, was levied not on the raw fruit, but on what came from *yekeb*, the area of the vat from which the juice came. In Joel 2:24 and Proverbs 3:10 *tirosh* is described as filling the vats. Unless it was the custom to leave the juice in the vat for the purpose of fermentation, it would denote the unfermented juice of the grape.

Tirosh, or *must*, which was intended for intoxicating purposes, was allowed to ferment by being exposed to the open air in large earthenware vessels, or *dolia*, for nine days; but light wines were made by the *dolia* being closed and fermentation checked after five days or so.²

In certain passages *tirosh* clearly denotes the product of fermentation. Its application in this respect, however, was apparently limited to new wine, either while still in the fermenting stage or during the next few months while the maturing process was still incomplete.³

Often Hosea 4:11 has been adduced in evidence that *tirosh* was of great intoxicating character. "Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the understanding." In the text, "wine" comes from *yayin* and "new wine" from *tirosh*. It is argued that "*tirosh* appears as the climax of engrossing influences, in immediate connection with *yayin*."⁴

In reply, it should be observed that in a climax the last term must be the strongest or highest in degree. In this instance, if it is a climax, *tirosh*, or new wine, must be more potent than *yayin*, but *tirosh* in the other thirty-seven passages where it occurs cannot be proved to be of strong character. *Yayin*, on the other hand, is in many passages clearly an intoxicating wine. The passage under consideration therefore contains no such climax as regards the degree of the intoxicating power.

A careful investigation of the context will reveal that the people of Israel had apostatized from God and committed idolatry, which in the Bible is called whoredom, and is so attended by licentiousness and sensuality in the use of intoxicating beverages. *Tirosh*, however, as has been shown, does not always mean wine, but vine-fruit or grapes in

1. Deut. 12:17; 14:23.

2. Samuel Rolles Driver, *The Books of Joel and Amos*, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: University Press, 1898), pp. 79–80.

3. Archibald Robert Stirling Kennedy, "Wine and Strong Drink," in *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, 4:5307.

4. "Wine," in *Unger's Bible Dictionary*, p. 1168.



clusters, and therefore by a figure of speech, vineyards, possessions, and riches, all of which took away their hearts from God.¹

The children of Israel had apostatized from God in three ways. (1) They followed strange gods, instead of the true God; (2) their best affections consisted in sensual pleasure, instead of being fixed upon God; (3) their estimate of good was limited to earthly things, represented by *tirosh*, the natural fruit of the vineyard.

Three things are said to take away the understanding. As whoredom is not the same as *yayin*, so *yayin* is not the same as *tirosh*. As physical intoxication is not an essential characteristic of whoredom, neither is it of *tirosh*, in particular when *yayin* is adequate for intoxication. There is no point in using *yayin* and *tirosh* in the passage if both mean intoxicating wine. The passage would then read, “Whoredom and *yayin* (intoxicating wine) and *tirosh* (intoxicating wine) take away the understanding.” Such statement would be tautologous. The three terms are symbolical.² Thus it can be seen that *tirosh* is a general term denoting the natural product, freshly expressed juice, and new wine of light alcoholic properties.³

Shekar: The term is employed twenty-two times, with one rendering, “strong drink.”

It is represented twelve times by *sikera* and one time by *oinos* in the Septuagint, both of which are generic. As *yayin* is the generic term for the liquid of *tirosh*, so *shekar* is the generic term for the liquid of *yitzhar*⁴ or of any other fruit than the grape, such as dates, pomegranates, barley, or millet. Archibald Kennedy stated that the etymology warrants the inference that *shekar* is to be regarded as a comprehensive designation for every kind of intoxicating beverage from whatever source it may be derived.⁵

1 P. Anstadt, “Communion Wine,” *The Quarterly Review of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* 16 (January 1886):9.

2. William Patton, *Bible Wines: The Laws of Fermentation and Wines of the Ancients* (New York: New York Temperance Association, 1874; reprint ed. Fort Worth: Star Bible and Tract Corporation, 1976), p. 59.

3. For a further discussion of *tirosh*, see “Tirosh,” *Gospel Advocate* 31 (24 July 1889):472–73.

4. In Deuteronomy 14:26, *shekar* answers to the *yitzhar* of verse 23, as *yayin* answers to *tirosh* in the same verse.

5. Archibald Robert Stirling Kennedy, “Wine and Strong Drink,” in *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, 4:5309.



On the contrary, Moses Stuart indicates that it no doubt denoted sweet juices of all kinds originally but in distinction from *yayin* came to be applied to juices of fruits other than grapes, and that by virtue of the saccharine principle, it may become alcoholic, but can be kept and used in an *unfermented state*.¹ On this point, Frederick R. Lees says, “*Shekar* signifies ‘sweet drink’ expressed from fruits other than the grape, and drunk in an unfermented or fermented state.”²

Although a variety of intoxicating beverages made from several fruits were known in antiquity, the translation of *shekar* to “strong drink” is unfortunate because it suggests the idea of distilled liquors which were not known at that time.³

Asis. The term is employed five times, with two renderings. It is rendered “sweet wine” four times and “juice” one time.

It is apparently a poetical synonym of *tiros*, denoting primarily the freshly expressed juice of the grape or other fruit.⁴ It is derived from *asas* signifying “to tread,” and therefore refers to the method by which the juice was expressed from the grape. Thus, it would very properly refer to new wine which had recently been expressed. It conveys the idea of that which is sweet and pure,⁵ and is probably the same as “the sweet” of Nehemiah 8:10, where it is referred to as *mamtaqqim*. If fermented at all, its alcoholic properties would no doubt be slight.

Shemarim. The term is employed five times, with three renderings. It is rendered “lees” two times, and “wines on the lees” and “dregs” one time each.

Derived from the verb *shamar*, “to preserve,” it signifies the thicker or sedimentary part of the mixture which has not been perfectly com-

1. William Patton, p. 57, citing Moses Stuart in Stuart’s letter to Eliphalet Nott, New York, p. 15. Emphasis mine, WDJ.

2. Frederick R. Lees and Dawson Burns, *Temperance Bible Commentary* (London: n.p., 1870), p. 418.

3. Burton Scott Easton, “Wine,” in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 5:3086; William Patton, p. 57, citing Moses Stuart in Stuart’s letter to Eliphalet Nott, New York, p. 14.

4. Archibald Robert Stirling Kennedy, “Wine and Strong Drink,” in *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, 4:5308.

5. Frederick R. Lees, “Wine,” in *A Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature*, 2:952.



bined with the rest. In Isaiah 25:6 where it occurs twice, it is rendered “wine on the lees,” but the literal meaning is “a feast of fat things, a feast of preserved things,” and the natural inference is that of “preserves.”¹

Sobe. The term is employed three times, with two renderings. It is rendered “drink” two times and “wine” one time.

From *sabah*, “to drink to satiation,” it likely denotes a rich boiled wine, such as would quickly surfeit. In Isaiah 1:22 the illusion to mixing with water favors the idea of a boiled wine.² Related to the Latin *sapa*, “must boiled down,”³ *sobe* likely has reference to any kind of intoxicating beverage.

Chemer. The term is employed two times with one rendering: “wine.” No doubt used in a generic sense, it is like a poetic substitute of *yayin*, with which it is almost identical in meaning.

Chamar. The term is employed six times with one rendering: “wine.” Closely related to *chemar*, it denotes the action of foaming or agitating. It is descriptive of the appearance of freshly expressed grape juice, or of juice in the process of fermentation. The compilers of the Talmud considered *chamar* as a sweet wine.⁴

Mesek, Mimsak, and Mezeg. *Mesek*, which is employed one time, is rendered “mixture.” *Mimsak* is employed two times with two renderings: “mixed wine” and “mingled wine.” *Mezeg*, which is employed one time, is rendered “mingled wine.”

The three terms, which are closely related, occur in a verbal form in several passages.⁵ Wine which is compounded from some other ingredient is signified, but whether drugged or diluted is not indicated. No definite conclusion can thus be drawn as to the quality of wine, or as to the

1. P. Anstadt, *The Quarterly Review*, p. 11.

2. Ibid., pp. 7–8.

3. “Wine,” in *Fausset’s Bible Dictionary*, p. 723.

4. Frederick R. Lees, “Wine,” in *Popular and Critical Bible Encyclopedia and Scriptural Dictionary*, 3:1725. The Talmud, which consisted of Jewish civil and canonical law, comprised 63 volumes, WDJ.

5. Prov. 9:2, 5; Ps. 102:9; Is. 5:22; 9:14.



nature of the substance introduced, whether spices or water.¹ That the latter is often the case is evidenced by the fact that the Septuagint in these and other passages render the term *kerannumi*, which denotes a weakening of wines by dilution.²

Fermented wine was used in ancient times as a medicine as well as a beverage. As a beverage, however, it was thought of as a mixed drink. Plutarch, for instance, says, “We call a mixture ‘wine,’ although the larger of the component parts is water.”³ On the contrary, wine was mixed with drugs, as is stated by Everett Ferguson.

The mixing of wine with drugs was common in the Near East and explains why “mixed” in such passages as Psalm 75:8 and Proverbs 23:29 (cf. Song of Solomon 8:2) means a stronger drink, contrary to classical usage.⁴

Usually a writer simply referred to a mixture of water and wine as “wine.” The term for unmixed wine,⁵ was used to indicate that the beverage was not a mixture of water and wine. In the Talmud, which contains the oral traditions of Judaism from about 200 B.C. to A.D. 200, there are several tractates in which the mixture of water and wine is discussed.⁶ At times the ratio would be one-to-one and even lower, but it should be noted that such a mixture was referred to as “strong wine.” The ratio of water to wine no doubt varied, for Homer referred to a ratio of twenty parts water to one part wine,⁷ while Pliny mentioned a ratio of eight parts water to one part wine.⁸

-
1. William Latham Bevan, “Wine,” in *Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. Horatio Balch Hackett (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1890), 4:3542.
 2. Joseph Henry Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (New York: American Book Co., 1889; reprint ed., Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), p. 344; “Mingle,” in *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, ed. William Edwyn Vine (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1940), 3:71–72.
 3. Plutarch, *Moralia* 140f.
 4. Everett Ferguson, “Wine as a Table-Drink in the Ancient World,” *Restoration Quarterly* 13 (1970):151.
 5. *Akratēsteron*.
 6. cf. Shabbath 77a; Pesahim 108b.
 7. Homer, *Odyssey* 9. 108; cf. *Natural History* 14. 6.
 8. Pliny, *Natural History* 14. 6.



In antiquity wine was usually stored in large pointed jugs called *amphorae*. When it was to be used it was poured from these containers into large bowls called *kraters*, and then mixed with water. From these bowls, cups or *kylixes* were then filled. It is important to observe that before wine was drunk it was mixed with water. The *kylixes* were filled not from the *amphorae* but from the *kraters*.

The Greeks of the Classical Period looked upon the drinking of unmixed wine as a Scythian or barbarian custom.¹ If the consumption of such wine was objectionable in ancient times, surely the imbibing of modern distilled beverages, which are much stronger, should not be considered as any less objectionable today.

Dam-anabim. The term, which is employed one time, is rendered “blood of grapes.” As it is used in Genesis 49:11, it conveys the idea of simple expressed grape juice.

Dam-enab. The term, which is employed one time, is rendered “blood of the grape.” The singular of *dam-anabim*, as employed in Deuteronomy 32:14, it is also indicative of unfermented grape juice.

Mishrath-anabim. The term, which is employed one time, is rendered “juice of grapes.” It is derived from the verb *sharah*, meaning to “loosen, or macerate.” As used in Numbers 6:3, it denotes the unfermented juice of grapes.

Ashishah. The term is employed four times, with three renderings. It is rendered “cake of raisins” two times, and “cakes of raisins” and “raisins” one time each. In no instance does it denote a liquid.

Anabim. The term, which is employed only one time, is rendered “cakes of raisins.” Its literal meaning is “grapes.”

Chomets. The term, which is employed six times, is rendered “vinegar.”

A weak wine, which has entered the acetic stage of fermentation, it was used by those engaged in the labors of the field to soften and render more palatable the dry bread which formed the food of the reapers.² It

1. Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 10. 427b.

2. cf. Ruth 2:14.



was also used as a beverage, likely mixed with water, in which case it resembled the *posca* of the Romans, which was not intoxicating in nature.¹

Yekeb. The term is employed eleven times, with two renderings. It is rendered “winepress” eight times, and “winepresses” three times. It is descriptive of the lower vat, while *gath* denotes the upper portion of the press.²

Mamtaqqim. The term is employed two times with two renderings, “sweet” and “most sweet.” From *mahthaq*, it denotes the thick, sweet wines, devoid of intoxicating properties, which needed to be greatly diluted because of their thickness.

This completes the list of Hebrew terms which either directly or indirectly have reference to wine. It has been observed that twelve terms are either rendered “wine” or contain the term in their employment.

New Testament

The New Testament employs five terms with six renderings. The terms with their definitions and classifications follow.

Oinos. The term, which is employed thirty-four times, is rendered “wine.”

It is a generic term, characterizing both fermented and unfermented wine.³ One writer refers to it as a “neutral word,” which denotes both winefat and fermented juice.⁴ It likely has a common etymological origin with *yayin* in the Old Testament, which carries the same basic meaning, and is employed in the Septuagint to denote both *yayin* and *tirosh*. Equivalent to the generic Latin term *vinum*, *oinos* is used eight times in connection with the adjective *neos*, denoting that which is new. Two

1. “Wine,” in *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, eds. John McClintock and James Strong (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1849), 10:1013.

2. “Wine,” in *Fausset’s Bible Dictionary*, p. 723.

3. Henry Leo Boles, “The Kind of Wine in the Lord’s Supper,” *Gospel Advocate* 110 (17 October 1968):664.

4. J. W. Roberts, “What Kind of Element in the Cup on the Lord’s Day, Fermented or Unfermented?” *Firm Foundation* 81 (18 August 1964):524.