

“WINE IS A MOCKER”

In **Prov. 20:1**, Solomon wrote, *“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise”* (NKJ). *“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler. And whoever erreth thereby is not wise”* (ASV). *“Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, And whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise”* (NASB). All versions use the term “Wine is a Mocker”, which we have used as a title of this book. The intoxicant is personified, as **it** speaks through the actions of the one drinking it, which causes **him** (the drinker) to mock at what is good and righteous. The Septuagint of the Old Testament says, *“Wine is an intemperate thing, and strong drink full of violence, but every fool is entangled with them.”*

Wine or strong drink motivates its fools to make fun of God, the Bible, marriage and the home, right living, women, children, the church of the Lord—by directly making fun (mocking) them, or by their actions, show their ridicule of these things.

Another great passage is in **Habakkuk 2:15-16**, where the prophet wrote, *“Woe to you who make your neighbor drink, who mix in your venom even to make them so as to look upon their nakedness. You will be filled with disgrace rather than honour. Now you yourself drink and expose your own nakedness. The cup in the Lord’s right hand will come round to you, and utter disgrace will come upon your glory”* (NASB). This passage truly needs no explanation, as “drinking” is spoken of as being disgraceful in what it causes its users to do.

It is interesting to read the English rendering of the **Septuagint** of the Old Testament (the translation in existence in the time of Jesus and the apostles). It reads, *“Woe to him that gives his neighbor to drink the thick lees of wine, and intoxicates him that he may look upon his secret parts. Drink thou also thy fill of disgrace instead of glory: Shake O heart, and quake. The cup of the right hand of the Lord will come round upon thee, and dishonor has gathered upon thy glory.”*

Do you get the idea that in the eyes of God, there is **no distinction** (except in degree) between just “drinking” and “drunkenness”?

When drunkenness is spoken of despairingly some will say, “Well, I don’t drink hard liquor, I just drink wine.” The basic difference between wine, beer and whiskey, is the **amount** of alcohol they contain. The wine sold and drunk in America contains around 11% to 13% of intoxicating alcohol, with a bottle of wine ranging from 5.5% to 10%, and is actually more intoxicating than beer, by 50%. Wine enters the bloodstream faster than beer, and will get one more intoxicated than will beer. Either beer or wine is harmful to the liver. A study of beer and wine will tell you that certain alcoholic drinks are **“less harmful”** than others—admitting that **all** are harmful to the human body, mind, and soul. The body of a Christian belongs to God, and is **not** for anything that does not bring glory to God (1 Cor. 6:19-20; 3:16). God declares that drinking is shameful, and absent from the glory of God (Hab. 2:15-16).

Alcohol wine or beer can be addictive, thus enslaving. We know of some who became such by beer alone, which contains less alcohol than does wine. The drinking of alcoholic beverages often begins with an attempt to be “social” with friends or fellow

employees in the business world. We have reached the point to where it seems to be the “normal” part of life, but this is not to be the case with Christians. Some begin with the idea of just experimenting or just tasting alcohol. Some begin and then want to “enjoy” it, so it continues. One Supreme Court candidate in recent years was accused of a crime (which he denied, but stated emphatically that he “loved” his beer), which he **may** well have committed but was so intoxicated that he has no memory of doing what was charged against him. Some excuse themselves for crimes or bad conduct on certain occasions by saying, “Well, I was drunk,” or “I had been drinking”, as if that excused him. Men are in prison today for crimes they committed while drinking.

Some drink for the “buzz” they get by drinking, even though sometimes it may be just a little drinking gives it to them. There is a law in the state of Texas put out by the Texas Highway Department, which says “**Buzz Driving is Drunk Driving.**” Those who continually or even drink occasionally, often do so to enjoy the “buzz.” Every time they are exhilarated or “buzzed” they have actually become intoxicated to some degree, and have violated the will of God. Those one or two drinks, even consumed in private, are not done by dedicated believers.

Two men may be riding in an automobile, both having been drinking wine, and admit to their drinking. The driver may have had two glasses of wine, while the other man had only one and is not “legally drunk. The driver may test out to be “legally” drunk, while the other man only one glass of wine. Both were intoxicated, but for the purpose of the law, only one, the driver, is charged. In actuality, both were intoxicated, but one was twice as drunk as was the other. What about “in the eyes of God?”

A very few years ago here in Denison, Texas, the pastor of one of the largest denominations in the city stood before his congregation and said, “I’m an alcoholic.” Then, he explained that a year or so before he got to the point where he could not sleep at night. A friend told him that if he drank a glass of wine when he went to bed each night, he could sleep better. He said he tried it, and it **worked. However,** he went on to say that he soon learned that he thought he **had** to have his wine, and now after a year he was an alcoholic. He then resigned his pastorate. He was now enslaved to the wine he thought he could drink without serious consequence. So, being “deceived”, he now had to suffer the consequence of his decision.

Don Tarbet