> “Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler, and whoever is led astray by it is not wise.” – *Proverbs 20:1*

This verse is a warning against the dangers of intoxicating drink. It speaks to the moral and spiritual consequences of allowing alcohol to control one’s behavior. In biblical theology, wisdom is not merely about knowledge it is about living in reverence to God (Proverbs 1:7). Thus, anyone misled by alcohol is acting against godly wisdom.

Theological Background:

The Bible doesn’t outright ban the consumption of alcohol, but it strongly warns against drunkenness, loss of self-control, and the behaviors that come with it. Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), and anything that undermines it is spiritually dangerous.

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1. Wine is a Mocker

The Hebrew word for *“mocker”* (לֵץ – *lets*) refers to someone who scoffs, belittles, or ridicules what is sacred or serious. This implies that wine has the power to turn people into mockers, leading them to speak and act in ways that dishonor themselves and others.

Example Day of Pentecost:

In Acts 2:13 (ESV), when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in tongues:

> “But others mocking said, ‘They are filled with new wine.’”

This shows that wine was associated with ridicule and confusion, even among onlookers. People assumed the strange speech was caused by drunkenness, not by God’s Spirit. Peter had to clarify:

> “These people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.” *Acts 2:15 (ESV)*

Theological Insight:

Drunkenness causes confusion and misinterpretation of spiritual matters. It clouds the mind and opposes the clarity and reverence required for spiritual discernment.

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2. Strong Drink is a Brawler

The term “strong drink” (שֵׁכָר *shekar*) refers to fermented beverages with higher alcohol content, like beer or liquor. The word “brawler” (הוֹמֶה *hōmeh*) suggests loud, aggressive, or violent behavior.

Drunkenness often leads to conflict. Quarrels, violence, and broken relationships are common consequences of alcohol abuse.

Scriptural Support:

Isaiah 5:11 (NKJV):

“Woe to those who rise early in the morning, that they may follow intoxicating drink... But they do not regard the work of the Lord.”

Drunkenness distracts people from God’s purpose.

Proverbs 23:29-35 (ESV):

A vivid picture of the destruction caused by alcohol:

> “Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? … Those who tarry long over wine… In the end it bites like a serpent and stings like an adder.”
> *This passage shows how alcohol deceives, leads to regret, and damages one’s health and morality.*

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3. He Who Is Led Astray by It Is Not Wise

The phrase “led astray” (תָּעָה – *ta’ah*) means to err, wander, or go off-course. Being controlled by alcohol leads a person away from the path of righteousness and wisdom.

Biblical Warnings on Drunkenness:

Galatians 5:19-21 (ESV):

“...drunkenness, orgies, and things like these... those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

1 Corinthians 6:10 (NKJV):

> “...nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards... will inherit the kingdom of God.”

Romans 13:13-14 (NKJV):

> “Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness... But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”

Conclusion: Biblical Wisdom vs. Worldly Indulgence

In biblical theology, wisdom is the practical outworking of the fear of God (Proverbs 9:10). Wine and strong drink, when abused, lead a person away from God’s wisdom into shame, mockery, strife, and ultimately judgment.

While moderate consumption is not labeled as sin, drunkenness is consistently condemned throughout scripture. It hinders spiritual alertness, damages witness, and grieves the Holy Spirit.

Final Encouragement:

> “Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.” *Ephesians 5:18 (ESV)*

Instead of turning to alcohol, Scripture encourages believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit, living lives marked by self-control, holiness, and spiritual clarity.

Maranatha The Lord is coming soon. Let us be sober and

watchful.

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