

CHAPTER IV.

THE WINE.

I. *The Fruit of the Vine*; 2. *The unleavened Fruit of the Vine*; 3. *The One Cup*; 4. *The drinking of the One Cup*.

CHRIST used and enjoined the use of the fruit of the vine.

This proposition all will admit, for it is the very language of Christ.

“But I say unto you, I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine,” etc. And he gave it to them, and said: “Take, drink ye all of it.”—Matt. xxvi: 27-29.

It was, then, the fruit of the vine, not of the tree, or of corn, and much less of the brier, that Jesus had drank with his disciples, and here commands them to drink. To use the fruit of any thing, save of the vine, is to violate the positive command of Christ. It well becomes us, then, to impartially ascertain what this “fruit of the vine” signified.

It will not be denied, that throughout the Bible, this phrase is used to denote one definite kind of drink—“the blood of the **grape**” (Deut. Xxxii; 4)—**wine**. The Jews designated it by several words, as **yani**, **tirosh**, **asis**, **chamer**, but all meaning the same thing—the expressed juice of the grape. This leads to another question:

Was this “fruit of the vine” the fermented or unfermented juice of the grape—unleavened or leavened?

This is only asking whether it was **real** wine at all, or something else. I do not understand that there ever was, or can be, a drop of **real** wine made without fermentation. The technical name of the mass of crushed grapes, or juice, before fermentation, which is the process by which all leaven is purged out, it is by **anticipation**; as it is said of the cook, “she has just put her bread into the oven to bake.” The cook never bakes bread, but the dough to make it bread. The dough is sometimes called bread by anticipation.

It will be conceded by all that the wine Jesus used at the Passover was identical with that the Jews were, in that age, wont to use in its observance, whatever they may use now.

It has been absurdly argued that fermented wine could not have been used at the Passover, because leaven was expressly forbidden. For this very reason fermented wine should be used. That which causes fermentation in wine is comparable to **leaven**—foreign to the nature of wine; and fermentation is but the latent energy of nature to throw this matter off, or settle it to the bottom of the vessel, so as to leave the wine pure and clear, and fitted to drink. Before this clarifying process takes place, it is unfit to drink, and will produce powerful cathartic effects. The corn and wine of Palestine were valuable products of trade and commerce, but unfermented wine was not known in their consumption or commerce.

(1) **Yani** is the usual term for their wine. It is used one hundred and thirty-six times in the Hebrew of the Old Testament. That it was fermented, and, therefore, if used to excess, intoxicating, read Gen. ix: 21-24, and Prov. xx: 1, and Ps. civ: 15. In itself, rightly used, it was valuable; but, abused, a curse.

(2) **Tirosh**, new wine, or wine of the first year, unmellowed by age, and heady. In Hosea iv: 11, we are told that “whoredom and wine (**yani**, and new wine, **tirosh**) take away the heart.” Not if **tirosh** was insipid and unpalatable “**must**.” Improperly used, **tirosh** can excite men to evil.

(3) **Asis** is used in four places, and capable of intoxicating (Isa. xlix: 29).

(4) **Chamer** was the fermented juice of the grape (Deut. Xxxii: 14, Isa. xxvii: 2). In both cases spoken of as a valuable product of the soil. One of the distinguished blessings God promised to his obedient people (Prov. iii: 10).

The Holy Spirit selected but one Greek word to indicate the wine Christ was charged with **drinking**, which he **made** at Cana, which the Jews used at their Passover, which Paul instructed the churches he organized to use at the Lord’s Supper, and Timothy to drink medicinally. That word is **oinos**. It is used twenty-seven times in the New Testament to indicate the fermented juice of the grape, twice as wine drinker, and five times figuratively. There is not the slightest ground for the most captious to question the well-established fact that **oinos** means the fermented juice of the grape. Think of the Jews charging Christ with being a bibber of something wholly unintoxicating! And Christ’s comparison founded upon men putting new grape-jelly or conserves of grapes, into the old skins, and they bursting per consequence! Or the members of the church at Corinth getting drunk on canned grape juice and sugar! But seriously, this latter case settles the question with all who bow to the authority of inspiration. This church used the kind of wine Paul instructed them to use when he instituted the ordinance. It was the fermented juice of the grape, and intoxicating when used to excess. He charged them with getting drunk at the communion table; but, in correcting their abuses, he did not tell them they used the wrong kind of wine, but only that they drank too much of the kind he appointed.

So much has been said and written of late by fanatical men under the plea of “temperance,” and yet much against the cause of temperance, to drive the wine from the Lord’s Supper which Christ used and commanded us to use till he comes again, that I submit a few authorities conclusive of the question.

The claim is that **fermented** wine was not used by the Jews, in their Passover, in the days of Christ; but the unfermented juice, preserved by boiling, or the water of dried raisins, or conserves of grapes, etc., and, therefore, we may, and should, use such slop; or even molasses and water, or water only, rather than **real** wine.

Rev. J.W. Willmarth, of Philadelphia, in an exhaustive article in reply to one of these raisin-water advocates, says:

“Evidence in regard to what modern Jews practiced, in the Passover, is not decisive. It requires much credulity to believe, that the ancient Passover cup, and the ‘cup of blessings,’ were filled with ‘an infusion of raisings in water,’ which Dr. Cunningham says Jews now use. If **true wine** was the only wine known to the Jews, and to the writers of the Bible, who can doubt that the same is meant in the Mishna, and was used at the Passover, and so at the communion?”

“I feel justified, therefore, in reaffirming them; and in exhorting my brethren not to **mutilate the Lord’s ordinance**, in accordance with the demands of ultraists, whose exegesis is worthless, and whose projects would annul the commandment of Christ, without doing a particle of good to any human interest.”

A. Van Dyck, D.D., for twenty-five years missionary in Syria, and a philologist of great renown, says (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, Vol. 26, p. 170):

“There is not, and, as far as I can find out, there never was, in Syria, any thing like what has been called ‘unfermented wine.’ The thing is not known in the East. They could not keep grape or raisin-water unfermented, if they would. It would become either wine or vinegar in a few days, or go into putrefactive fermentation. The native churches—Evangelical, Maronite, Greek, Coptic, and Arminian—all use fermented wine at the communion. They have no other, and have no idea of any other.

“The evidence goes to confirm my views of ‘Bible wine,’ and of the wine of the Lord’s Supper. If any one wishes to examine further, the sources of information are open; the verdict of Christian scholarship is decisive.”

If the reader will refer to “Hackett’s Smith’s Bible Dictionary,” Art. WINE, he will find this:

“In the condemnatory passages, no exception is made in favor of any other kind of liquid, passing under the same name, but not invested with the same dangerous qualities.

“Nor again, in these passages, is there any decisive condemnation of the substance itself, which would enforce the conclusion, that elsewhere an unfermented liquid must be understood. The condemnation must be understood of **excessive use** in any case; for even when this is not expressed, it is implied; and, therefore, the instances of wine being drunk without any reproof of the act, may, with as great improbability, imply the moderate use of an intoxicating beverage, as the use of an unintoxicating one.”

The editor of the *Congregational Review*, No. 54, in reviewing a book of Mr. Thayer’s on “Communion Wine and Bible Temperance,” published by the National Temperance Society, in which he attempts to show that there are **two kinds** of wine mentioned in the Bible, one intoxicating and the other not, uses this language:

“We have gone over the arguments he has produced; we have considered his so-called evidence, which has so often done duty in its narrow range; we have pondered the discussions of Lee, Nott, Ritchie, and Duffield before him; what is more, we have gone over the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures carefully for ourselves; have sifted testimony of travelers who know, and those who did not know; have corresponded with missionaries and Jewish Rabbis on this subject; and, if there is any thing in Biblical literature on which we can speak confidently, we have no doubt that Dr. Lawrie is right, and that Rev. Mr. Thayer is wrong. In these views we are thoroughly supported. If we mistake not, the Biblical scholarship of Andover, Princeton, Newton, Chicago, and New Haven, as well as ‘Smith’s Bible Dictionary,’ and ‘Kitto’s Bible Cyclopaedia,’ is with us. One of the most learned and devout scholars of this country recently said to us: ‘**None but a third-rate scholar adopts the view that the Bible describes two kinds of wine.**’”

Gavazzi, the most learned and eloquent Protestant preacher of Italy, says:

“I have indulged in the expression ‘unfermented wine’ for the sake of argument, although, to me, as an Italian, the expression imparts downright nonsense. In fact, wine is only wine by fermentation, and to speak of unfermented wine, is to speak of dry water, nightly sun, of unelectric lightning.”—*Belfast Witness*.

Such a cloud of witnesses, representing the highest scholarship of America, ought to forever settle this wine question with every Christian man and woman.

The fruit of the vine, **purged of all its leaven**, cleansed of all impurities by nature’s own energy, was used by Christ, instead of blood, to symbolize the great fundamental doctrine of his vicarious sufferings and death for his people—the laying down of his own life. It was non other

than the Lord of glory, the Lawmaker himself, who so pitied and loved us that he gave himself, and not another, for us; who alone, without the partnership aid of man or angel, endured all the penalty due our sins. It is this great fact we should discern, that it was the Lord's—our Lord's—body, and not the body of a mere human being, that was lacerated and torn, and writhed in pain, every pang of which reached the Divinity that inhabited it: that it was our Lord's blood which the wine symbolized, even the blood of the Everlasting Covenant, every drop of which cost him a pain; and not the blood of a man, the sufferings of a mortal being, in the slightest conceivable degree, that is symbolized by the wine of the Supper.¹ What had mortal, finite man to do in assisting Christ to pay our penalty, much less to have paid it all! Christ surely had no helper in this infinite transaction. The name he ever wishes to be known to us is the “Lord our Righteousness.” He himself, unassisted and alone, fulfilled all righteousness for us; and it was none other than the blood of our Divine Redeemer that was the purchase price of our redemption. Paul emphasizes this fact in the strongest language possible, when he declares that God purchased his Church **with his own blood** (Acts xx: 28), **his own sufferings**, and the offering up of himself as a sacrifice for our sins.

THE ONE CUP.

There should be but “one cup” or **measure** of wine upon the table, not several bottles or measures, and this, after thanks, can be poured into as many glasses or cups as is necessary to distribute it readily.

“The loaf which we break, is it not Communion in the body of Christ? Because [as there is] one loaf, we the many are one body, for we are all partakers of the one loaf.’ Such seems to us most probably the translation of this confessedly difficult passage... **There should be only one loaf** and *one vessel of wine*, to symbolize the one body.”—*Religious Herald*, September 30, 1880.

While in one aspect it has respect to the oneness of the local body celebrating, in another it symbolizes the one sacrificial offering of Christ for us. We have heretofore seen that whatever was used to typify—**point forward to**—the salvation provided through the sacrifice and mediation of Christ, is selected to symbolize—**point back** to the same saving truths. By referring to the twenty-ninth of Exodus we find the law of the daily sacrifices. **One** lamb was appointed to be offered for the morning and **one** for the evening sacrifice continually, and in this way: “And with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with a fourth part of a hin of beaten oil, and a fourth part of **a hin of wine** for a **drink** offering.” This offering was a cause general in its application and continually offered. It was precisely at the hour when the evening atonement sacrifice was to be offered that Christ on the cross cried out with a loud voice, “It is finished;” and yielded up his spirit—**offered up himself**. This cry signified that all the types that pointed to the Great Sacrifice for sin **once** to be offered, were in him fulfilled; in visible attestation of which—“Behold! The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom,” and the mercy-seat, now sprinkled with the blood of the everlasting covenant, and thus made accessible to sinful man, was thrown open to the approach of a lost race through the mediation of Jesus Christ.

¹Since the fifth century there have been dialecticians who claim that it is impossible for Divinity to suffer, and that the mere human part of Christ alone endured all the suffering, while the divine part of the Christ, the Lord of glory, suffered not the slightest inconvenience! If this be so, then the wine symbolizes the blood of a **human** being, and not the blood of God, our divine Redeemer, and we find ourselves **idolaters!** But Christ said: ‘This is my blood,’ it symbolizes my sufferings and death in your own stead.

So, in this ordinance, **wine** instead of blood is employed to symbolize the great saving truth, that a complete satisfaction of the infinite claims of violated law had been made by the **blood**—the precious **blood**—of our Divine Redeemer. Christ said of the wine, this is—represents—the new covenant in my blood which was shed for you. The doctrine, the saving truth symbolized, is **salvation only through the sufferings and death of Christ**. The **one** cup or measure of **wine**, therefore, evidently signifies the **one suffering** Redeemer, not two, a God and a man, but **one victim**, the **one** offering for sin, not **two**, the one human and the one divine; and that but **once** offered for our sins, which forever takes the place of those continual offerings which could not take away sin. Paul explains it thus: “By the which will or covenant, ratified by the blood of Christ, we are sanctified through the offering or the body of Jesus Christ **once**.” Here Paul refers to the daily sacrifices above described: “And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering **oftentimes** the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but this man, after he had offered **one sacrifice** for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God. For by **one offering** he **hath perfected forever** them that are sanctified.”

By the light of this teaching we can the better understand Paul’s reasoning with the Jewish Christians upon this **one** offering, once for all offered for each one that comes to God by it has had all its divine efficacy applied to his cleansing and sanctification. If such an one should fall away from this, lose the efficacy of this, he must necessarily be lost forever, since there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. Christ can not again suffer and die as his sacrifice, and no other blood is more availing, and this can not be applied the **second** time, and, therefore, it must be impossible to renew such an one to repentance, to save one who has exhausted the efficacy of the **one** and **only** offering for sin. The reader will see that it is only a **supposition**, doubtless used to emphasize the infinite superiority of the blood of Christ over that of the blood of the bestial sacrifices under the law. Paul leaves his brethren in no doubt as to the value of the blood of Christ, for he declares that, by its application **once**, “**it forever perfected** those sanctified by it,” so that there was no necessity for Christ to be offered again, or for any other atoning blood to be applied, since **the efficacy of the blood of Christ can never be lost**. Bless God for this symbol of deepest significance! **One cup—one blood**. Enough for me—for all, and **one application** of it! Enough, since it forever perfects, saves, all who receive its gracious cleansing!

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