



**WHEN IT  
SPARKLES  
IN THE CUP**



**THE BIBLE  
NEVER SAYS,  
"THOU SHALT  
NOT DRINK  
ALCOHOL"**

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- The gospel is all about “being” something (1 Peter 1:15–16, 5:8, Titus 2:2–8, Matthew 5:48). This comes in the form of our behavior, but it starts in the heart (Matthew 15:11–20).

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- So it is counter-intuitive to ask for a "Thou shalt not..." scripture, while at the same time arguing that the Bible isn't meant to be read as empty "Thou shalt not..." statements.



**THERE IS A LOT OF  
WINE-DRINKING IN  
THE BIBLE. DIDN'T  
JESUS TURN WATER  
INTO WINE?**

- **Again, that is true. But how much applicability is there to modern-day alcohol consumption? Are we really talking about the same thing in every context, across the board?**

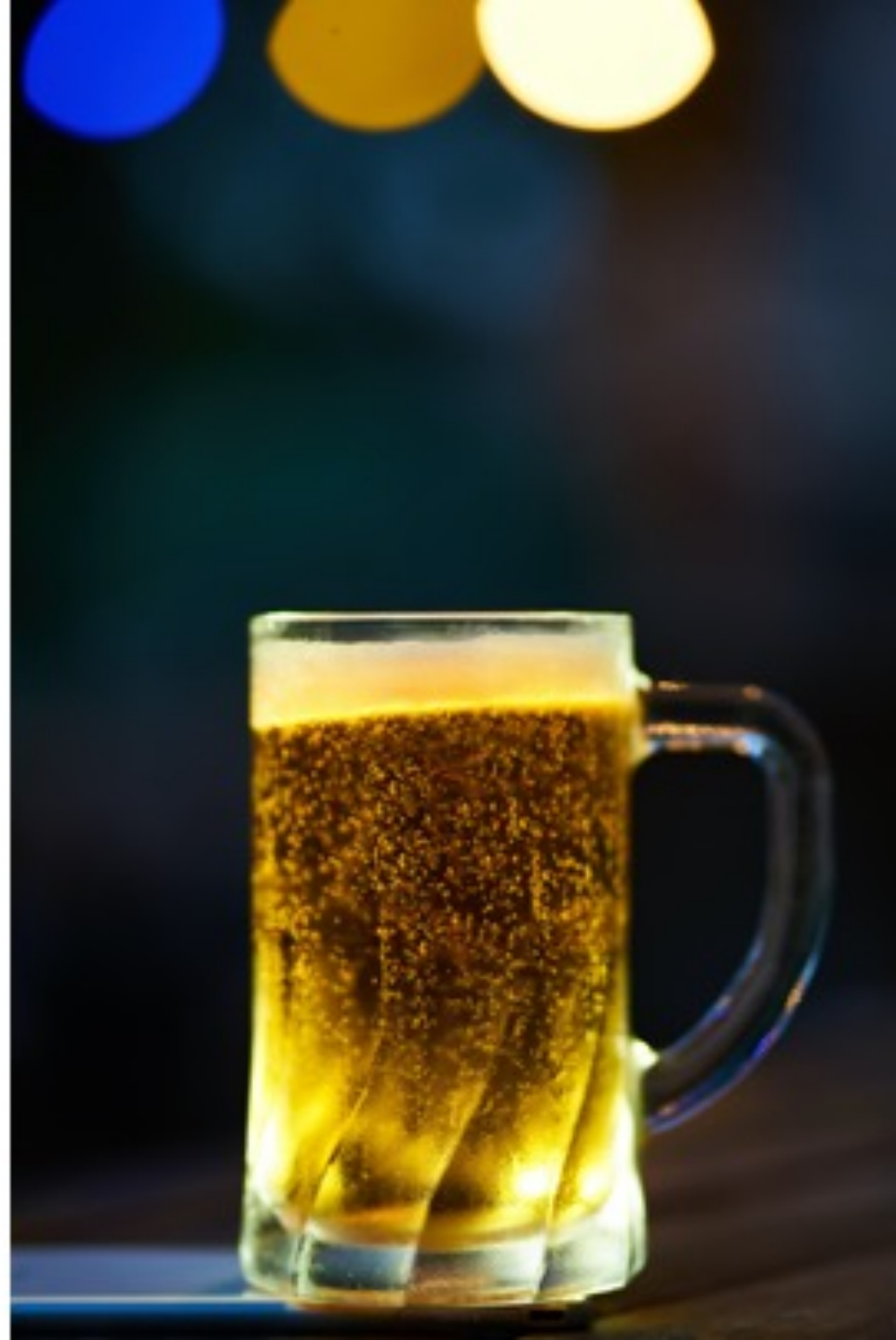
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- **Eleven different Hebrew words have been translated as “wine”, ranging from fresh grapes from the vine (“Tirosh” in Isaiah 65:8) to what could be called “strong drinks” (“shekar”). So context is important. Be careful that you’re not stretching the word “wine” to fit an agenda (that goes both ways).**



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- **Always be wary of “that which proves too much, proves nothing at all.”**

## **Alcohol content of modern beverages:**

- **Beer 2–6% alcohol**
- **Cider 4–8% alcohol**
- **Wine 8–20% alcohol**
- **Tequila 40% alcohol**
- **Rum 40% or more alcohol**
- **Brandy 40% or more alcohol**
- **Gin 40–47% alcohol**
- **Whiskey 40–50% alcohol**
- **Vodka 40–50% alcohol**
- **Liqueurs 15–60% alcohol**



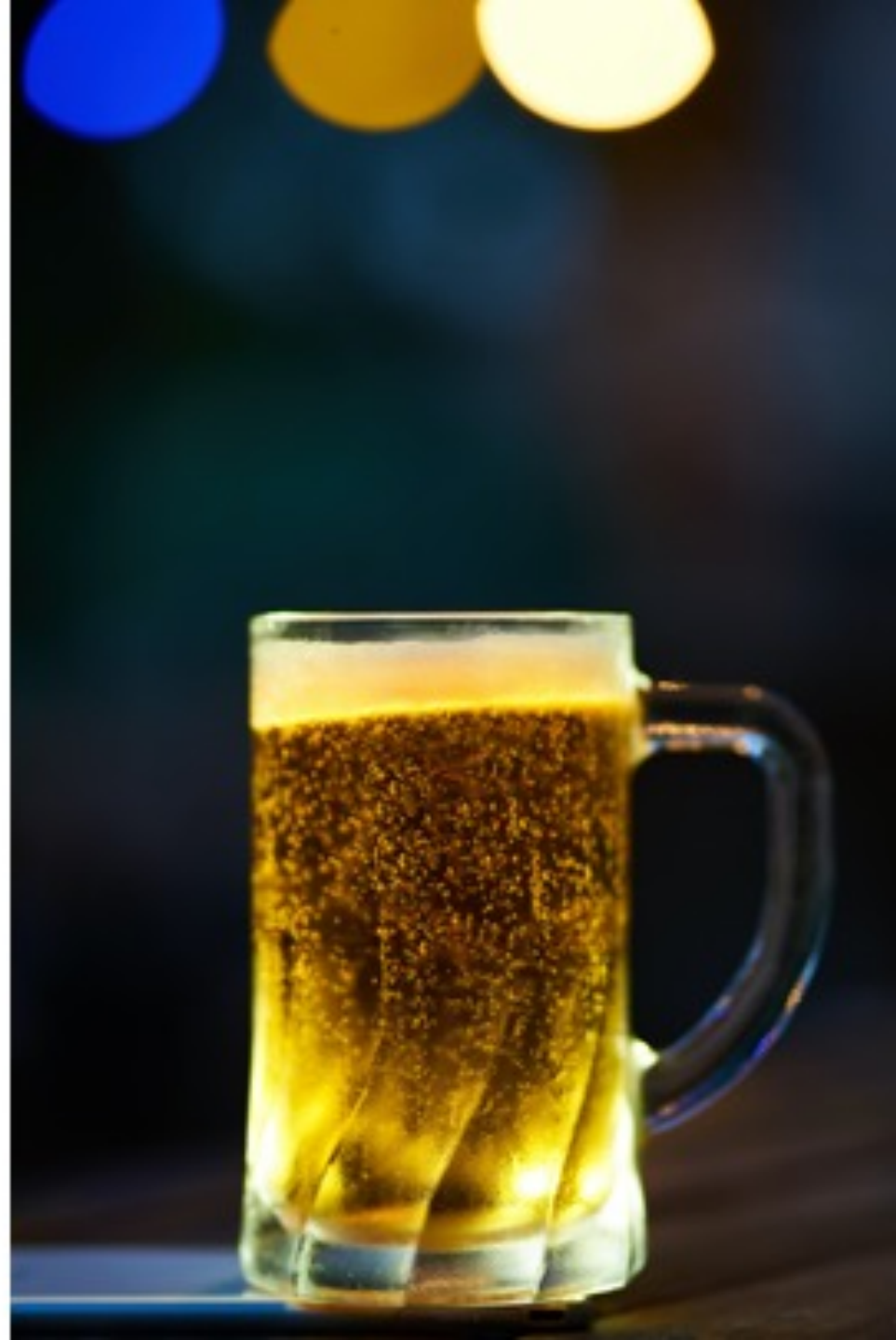
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- **In fact, wine with some amount of alcohol was probably the safest beverage they had. Enough to kill water-borne bacteria but not strong enough in normal hydration to cause drunkenness.**



In ancient Rome and Greece, people didn't have a great deal of choice when it came to quenching their thirst, with only a few kinds of fruit juice, warm goat's milk or stagnant water on the menu. If they had the opportunity to sweeten the otherwise foul-tasting water, they would, and so wine was used to purify and add flavour. In fact, wine had to be cut with water...Adding water was the only way to make it palatable. Still, despite their relative ignorance when it came to preservation, these civilisations were very well aware of the dangers of over-indulgence...thus these communities faced a dilemma: wine provided a safer and more sanitary drinking option than bog water or curdling milk, but excess consumption was also not without its dangers. As such, it seems that the ancients dealt with the issue by mixing wine and water to prevent intoxication. Homer's *Odyssey* mentions a ratio of 20 parts water to one part wine, Pliny states a ratio of eight parts water to one part wine was the norm, and Athenaeus writes in a play that three parts water to one part wine was customary. Regardless of the chemistry, drinking undiluted wine was considered scandalous, and some Rabbis in Jewish society would refuse to bless wine that hadn't been mixed with water.


Rachel England, journalist, writing for [wineinvestment.com](http://wineinvestment.com)  
on the history of wine



From an article in *Scientific American*, outlining research first published in the *British Journal of Biomedical Sciences*, wine was shown (in every concentration) to effectively kill cholera in water.

Other studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of wine in killing water-borne diseases such as giardia, dysentery, salmonella, shigella, and e. coli.

In a time well before modern water treatment, a mix of wine and water would have been the safest and most effective means of hydration. That is a completely different thing from social drinking today — akin to the difference between a drug being prescribed by a doctor and the same drug being used for recreation.



**Partaking of diluted wine that is only incidentally alcoholic, as  
the safest form of hydration**

**VS**

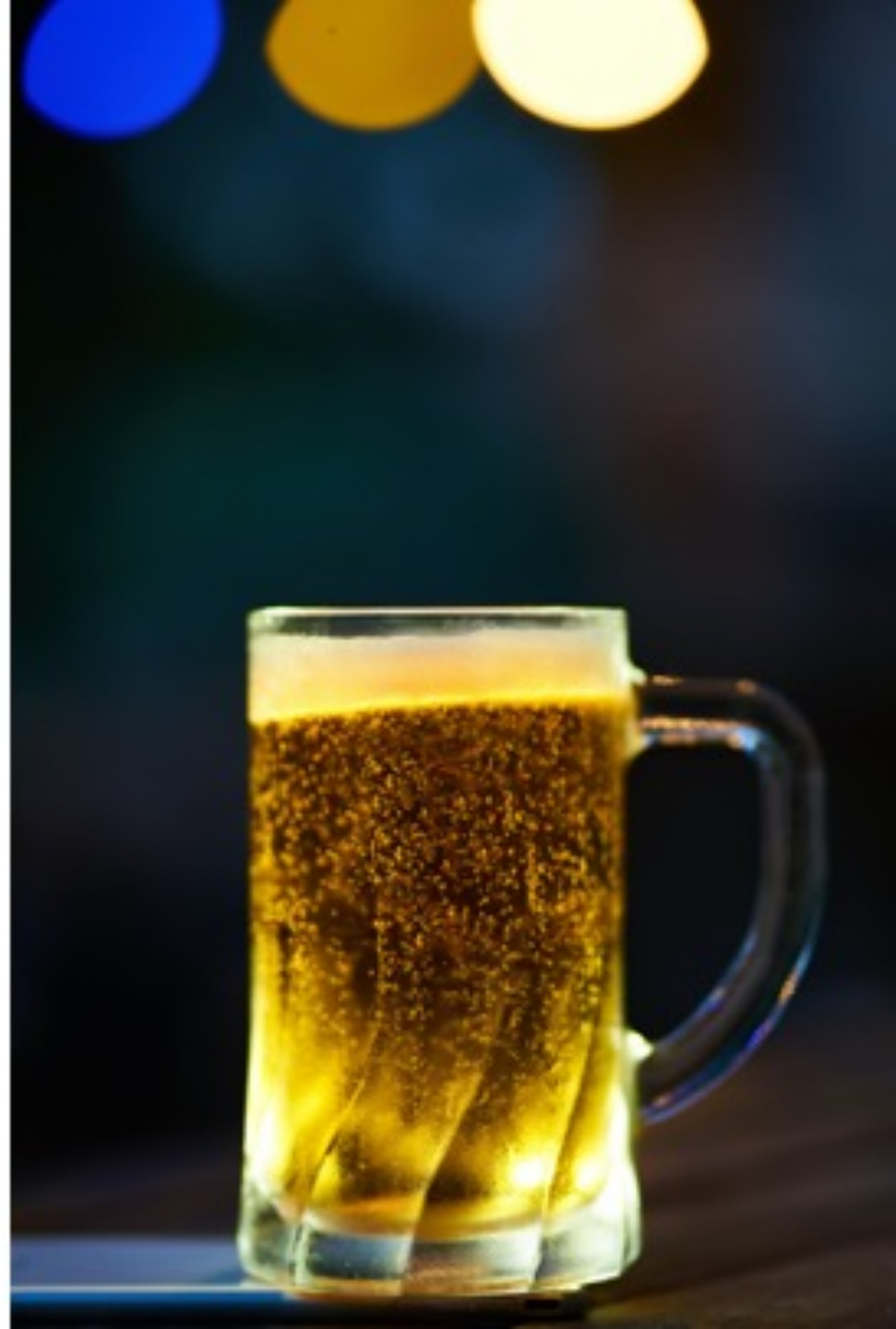
**Partaking of modern beverages that are intentionally crafted to  
be many times more alcoholic, for recreation**



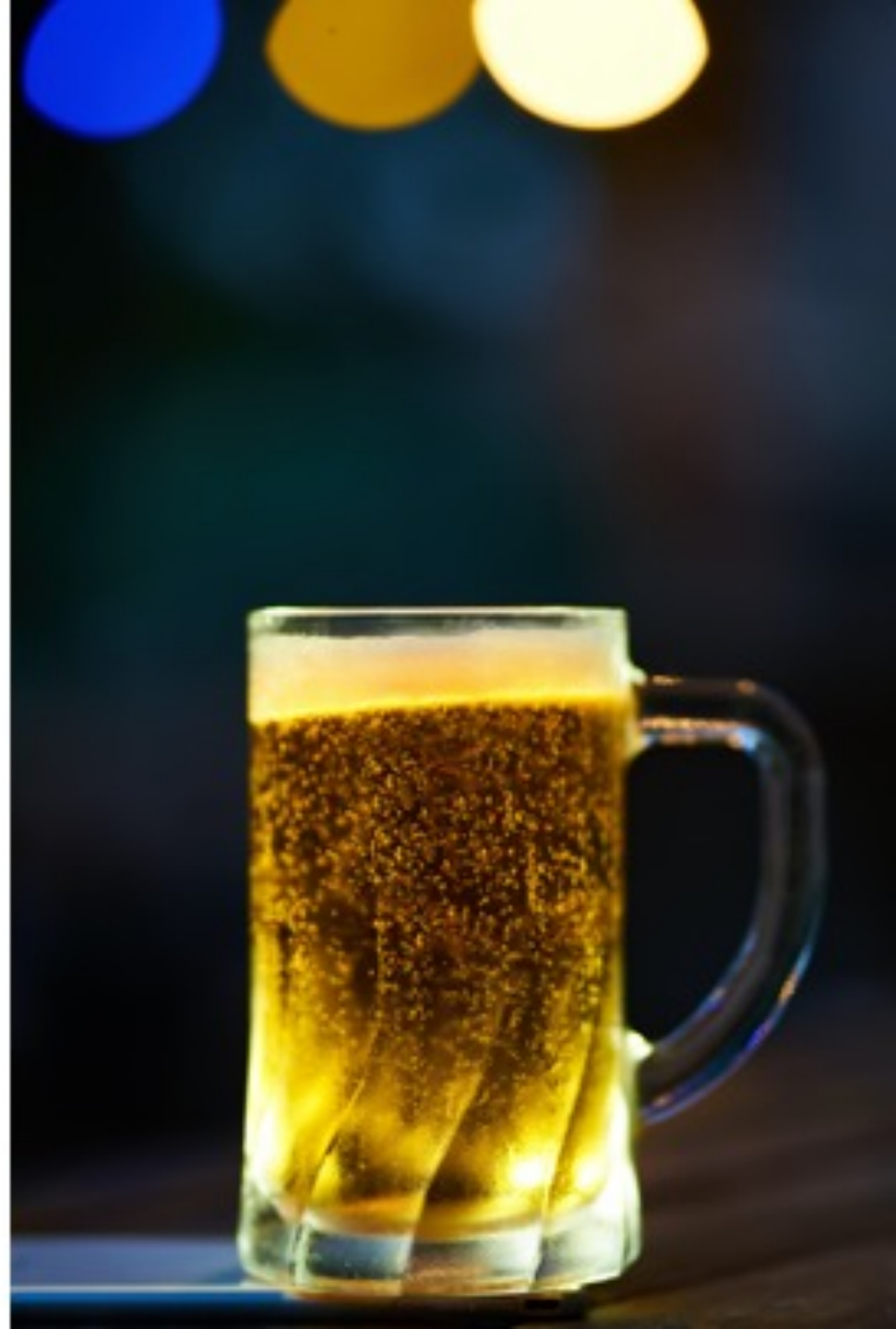


**THE BIBLE ONLY  
CONDEMNS  
DRUNKENNESS, NOT  
DRINKING ITSELF.**

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- **What I mean is that we don't have to achieve some level of measurable drunkenness to violate God's proscription against it. Notice Isaiah 5:11. Remember from Matthew 5 that one does not have to commit adultery to be guilty of it. One does not need to murder to be guilty of it. When we begin down a path, willfully defying all the dangers, with an intent to do something, we have become a violator of God's will. The road to drunkenness begins at the first drink. It is paved in "I'll just have one more."**






**THE CHURCH JUST LIKES TO  
PICK AND CHOOSE WHICH  
THINGS TO HARP ABOUT.  
WHAT ABOUT GLUTTONY? OR  
PRESCRIPTION DRUG ABUSE?  
OR HUMAN TRAFFICKING?**

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- **We SHOULD be more bold in addressing such crises, as well as racism, pornography, domestic abuse, and over-indulgence. But let's not pretend that alcohol doesn't deserve to be confronted.**



**“Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, and whoever is  
intoxicated by it is not wise”  
PROVERBS 20:1**



**“Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long over wine, those who go to taste mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, when its sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, and your mind will utter perverse things. And you will be like one who lies down in the middle of the sea, or like one who lies down on the top of a mast. ‘They struck me, but I did not become ill; they beat me, but I did not know it. When shall I awake? I will seek another drink”**

**PROVERBS 23:29ff**

# I NEED TO ASK MYSELF . . .

- Does alcohol make me more or less prepared to face judgment? To have an answer for how I spent my days and my Master's talents?
- Does it make me better equipped to deal patiently and compassionately with my kids? My spouse?
- Does it bring out the best in me? Am I growing closer to holiness? Can I make a claim to the priesthood of God?
- Does it help me in the fight against Satan? More alert and aware of a spiritual predator who is waiting for a moment of weakness to strike?
- Does it make me more ready to answer questions about my faith? Talk to my kids about salvation? Sin?
- Does it help me harness my tongue, divert my eyes, open my ears to criticism, and guard my heart?