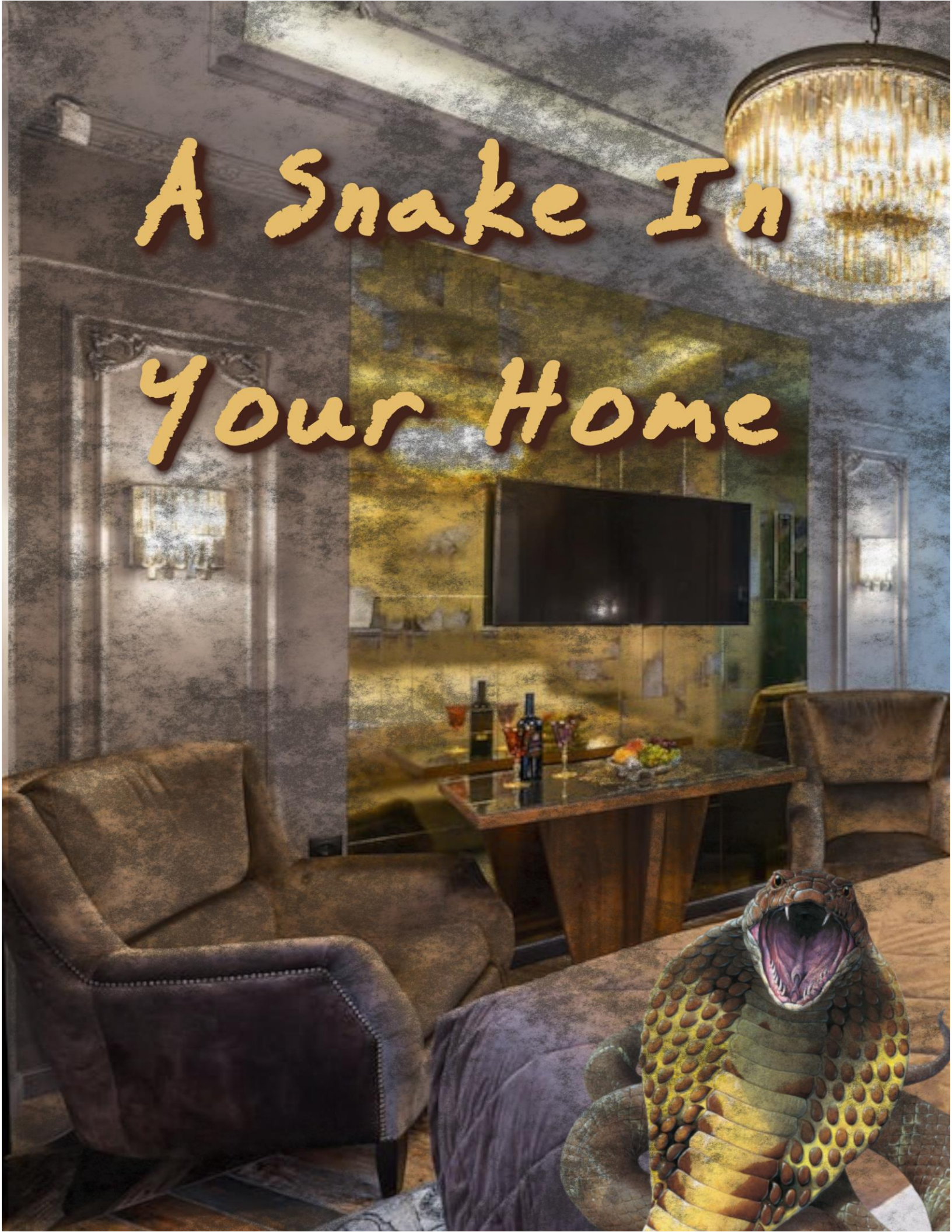
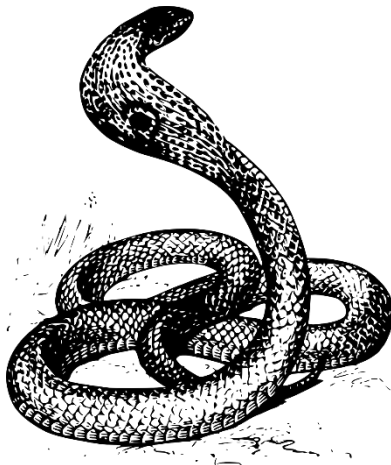


A Snake In Your Home



In 2011, a 47-year old snake owner in England died when his pet cobra bit him. He loved snakes and kept more than 20 of them in a building behind his home. Just a few days before he was bitten by his pet cobra he had said, that since he provided the snakes with food and water, they were "not going to go out of their way to do harm" to him. Just a few days later he was killed by one of the cobras. But he is not the only snake owner to have been killed by a pet snake. Many other people have also been killed by snakes they were keeping as pets.

Now some of you may think people who keep poisonous snakes as pets are foolish. After all snakebites kill between 81,000 to 138,000 people every year. And another 400,000 people have lifelong injuries from snakebites like losing an arm or leg or going blind.¹ Yes, poisonous snakes are dangerous and often deadly to play with. They definitely don't make safe pets. But there is something much more deadly than a snake. And that deadly thing you might be playing with and you might even have in your home.



While only 138,000 people die from snakebites every year, this thing we are going to talk about kills more than three million people every year. ² That means that while every 15 minutes only 4 people will die from poisonous snake bites in that same 15 minutes, 75 people will die from

the thing we are going to talk about. And that is just those that die from it. It is also a cause of more than 200 kinds of diseases or injuries. ³

What is this dangerous thing that kills so many more people every day than snakes do? The answer is alcohol. Yes, alcohol. It kills more people than any cobra, or mamba, adder, or any other poisonous snake. It kills more people than all the poisonous snakes in the world ever kill. And God warned about its dangers more than 2000 years ago.

In the book of Proverbs, God told us,

"Look not ...upon the wine when it is red... At the last it biteth like a serpent [snake], and stingeth like an adder." **(Proverbs 23:31, 32)**

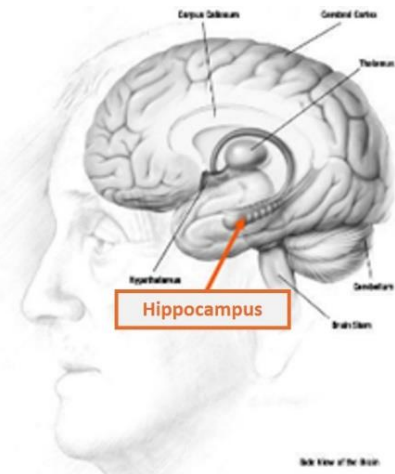
So how does alcohol kill people? And is there any amount of alcohol that is safe to drink? Let us look at the different effects of alcohol on the different parts of the body and you can answer some of these questions for yourself.

Alcohol's Effect on the Brain

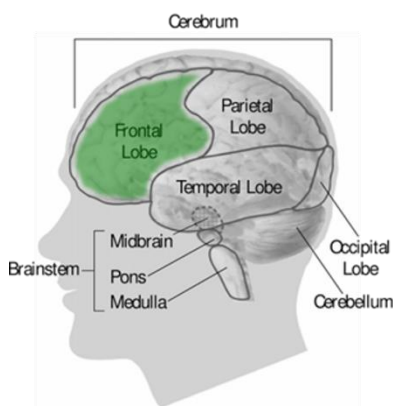
For many years, scientists have known that drinking large amounts of alcohol (3 or more drinks a day) shrinks the brain and destroys brain cells. But a recent scientific study done in 2022 discovered that even less alcohol (only 1 can of beer, or a glass of wine or a shot of spirits a day)

can begin causing changes in the brain. The more alcohol a person drinks the bigger the changes in the brain.⁴

One area of the brain that is shrunk by alcohol is the **hippocampus**. This is the part of the brain that **helps you to remember things**. One study showed that while those who drank lots of alcohol had the most shrinkage in the hippocampus, those who drank moderate amounts of alcohol had three times the amount of shrinkage when compared to those who did not drink any alcohol.⁵



Another area of the brain that is affected by alcohol is the **frontal lobe**. The frontal lobe of the brain is the part of the brain that **controls a person's reasoning, and ability to judge what is right and wrong**. If someone's frontal lobe becomes injured it can cause the person to lose their moral and religious principles, their love for their family, their ability to reason and solve difficult problems, and they can become forceful and lose self-control, as well many other problems.⁶



Brain scans have shown that alcoholics, those addicted to alcohol, have lost a large amount of frontal lobe brain cells. ⁷ But researchers have also shown that social drinkers (even those who drink as little alcohol as one drink in a week) have less abstract reasoning, which is a job of the frontal lobe. **Abstract reasoning** is things like being able to solve a problem in a new way, or finding out the reason of why something happened. The researchers did the tests to test the abstract reasoning of people who drank social amounts of alcohol. The tests were done at least 24 hours after the person had last drunk any alcohol. And their reasoning was still not the best. So even after a person may think all the alcohol is out of their body, there is still damage to the frontal lobe. ⁸

Those who deal with car accidents have noticed that even one drink of alcohol messes up a person's judgement and thinking and makes them much more likely to cause a car accident. The Bible is clear that those who drink wine or alcohol cannot be trusted to make right decisions. That is why the Bible says,

"...it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: Lest [for fear that] they drink, and forget the law, and pervert [corrupt] the judgment of any of the afflicted [people in trouble]."— (**Proverbs 31:4, 5**)

Jesus said we are to love God with all our mind (**Matthew 22:37, 38**). How can we love God with all of our mind if we are drinking something that destroys our mind and makes it where we cannot think as clearly?

Alcohol's Effect on the Immune System

The immune system of the body is like the army of the body. It is the immune system that fights off things like bacteria and viruses that get into the body. If someone has a low immune system, they can easily get sick.

Only two drinks of alcohol lowers the body's ability to fight bacteria and viruses by 67%.⁹ That is kind of like having an army of 100 soldiers protecting your city from a large army of thousands of enemy soldiers. But then you take away the guns of 67 of your soldiers. So only 33 soldiers actually have anything to fight with. By doing this you have made two-thirds of your army not able to protect you. That is rather foolish if you think about it. But that is what you do to your immune system when you drink alcohol.

The effect of alcohol on the immune system has been shown to make it more likely to get many different kinds of sicknesses (like pneumonia, tuberculosis and the flu) when one is drinking alcohol. It has also been shown that the immune system can remain weak from the alcohol even for as much as seven hours after the body has finished processing all the alcohol.⁹

Alcohol's Effect On Babies and Children

It is not safe to drink any amount of alcohol while a woman is pregnant. *"Alcohol is proven to be dangerous at every stage of pregnancy."*¹⁰ Besides many other birth defects, alcohol can cause something called Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). It is not known exactly how many children in the world have FAS but some studies in the USA and western Europe suggest 1-5 out of every 100 children may have FAS.¹¹

FAS has different signs that can be seen on the child's face, the 3 most common being shown in the picture of a baby with FAS. If the child/baby has outward signs, it is sure that their brain will have been damaged by the alcohol. But even if the child/baby has no outward signs of FAS they may still have brain damage. Some of the brain problems in children, that can be caused by their mothers drinking alcohol while they were pregnant, are: bad memory, difficulty paying attention, being overly active and unable to sit still, problems with learning things, and problems with reasoning and judgement.



Women usually find out they are pregnant and then they stop drinking. But sometimes the alcohol has already damaged the baby before the mother knows that she is pregnant. In fact, some of the children with FAS come from mothers who stopped drinking, but they only stopped drinking alcohol after they found out they were pregnant. But they stopped too late, the baby's brain had already been damaged by the alcohol.

And it is not just a pregnant woman's drinking that can affect the baby. More and more research is showing that what a woman drinks before she gets pregnant, as well as what the father drinks before he gets a woman pregnant, can affect the child's brain.

The father's drinking of alcohol before getting the mother pregnant has been shown to cause babies being born with a low birth weight, smaller brains, and problems with thinking.¹²

One study said that women should stop drinking at least one year before they get pregnant and men should stop at least 6 months before they get the woman pregnant.¹² But even drinking alcohol before that time might still have unknown harmful effects on the baby.

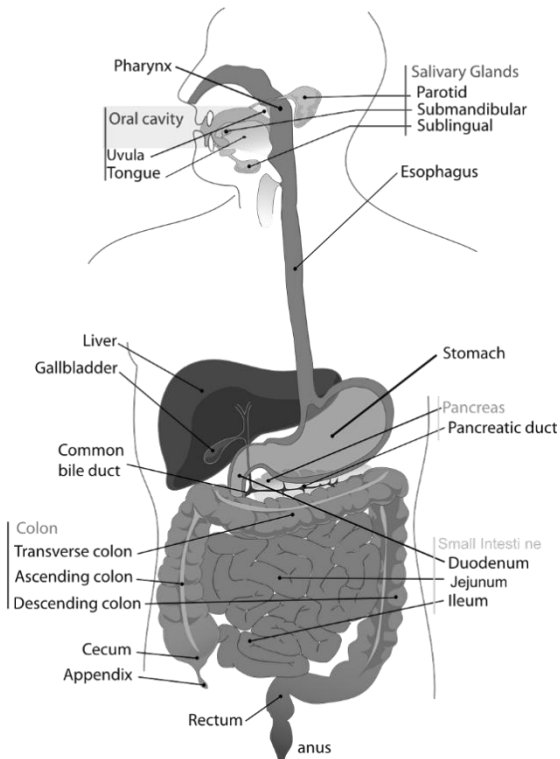
Alcohol and Cancer

Alcohol causes many different types of cancers including liver, breast, colon, mouth, and many others.

Drinking any amount of alcohol can cause cancer but the more alcohol someone drinks the more likely they are to get cancer.¹³ Many years ago alcohol was classed as a Group 1 carcinogen. That means there was enough evidence to show that alcohol definitely caused cancer.

Even though the more alcohol someone drinks makes them more likely to get cancer, in Europe at least half of all cancers that were caused by drinking alcohol were caused by drinking small or moderate amounts of alcohol.¹⁴ In fact, for breast cancer, each regular sized glass of wine a woman drinks a day makes her 6% more likely to get breast cancer.¹⁵

Once someone stops drinking alcohol their body gets healthier. But it can take many years for the body to heal from the damage of alcohol. One study found that 16 years after someone stops drinking they are still more likely to get mouth and throat cancers than someone who never drank alcohol. But they are still less likely to get those cancers than someone who is still drinking alcohol.¹⁶



Alcohol and the Stomach

Alcohol irritates and damages the protective lining in

your stomach. It also causes the stomach to produce more stomach acid. And it slows down the digestion of food so the food will not leave the stomach as quickly as it should. All of this can cause stomach problems, ulcers, heartburn, and lead even to stomach cancer.¹⁷

Alcohol and the Liver

The liver is the largest organ in the body and it has many jobs including to process and get rid of poisons. The liver processes over 90% of the alcohol a person drinks, so drinking, especially large amounts of alcohol, can really hurt the liver.

Alcohol damages the cells of the liver. In the first stages of liver problems the person might not have any symptoms, so they might not even realize their liver is being



damaged. In the early stages, liver damage can be reversed if the person stops drinking alcohol. **Fatty liver** (the first stage) can often be reversed in two to six weeks if the person stops drinking.¹⁸ But if they continue drinking the liver can become permanently damaged in a condition known as **cirrhosis** where the liver can no longer work properly. This can lead to liver failure and also an increased

chance of developing liver cancer. If a person stops drinking to reverse the early stages of liver problems, they should never start drinking again or the liver problems will most often begin again. ¹⁸

Other Health Effects of Alcohol

The other bad effects of alcohol are too many to list them all. But here are a few more:

- **Nutritional Deficiencies:** A nutritional deficiency is where the body does not have enough of a nutrient for its (the body's) needs. Drinking alcohol can cause you to lose or be unable to get proper nutrition from your food. This can cause you to have many different kinds of nutritional deficiencies and also all the health problems those deficiencies can cause. For example, alcohol can cause a vitamin A deficiency, meaning you will not get enough vitamin A from your food. Not having enough vitamin A can cause night blindness and other eye problems as well as making you more likely to get sick. Some other nutrients that drinking alcohol can cause you to have too little of, are vitamins, B1, B2, B3, B5, B6, B12, C, D, E, K, folic acid, calcium, magnesium, zinc, iron, manganese, potassium, chromium, and omega 3s.¹⁹
- **Dehydration:** Alcohol can cause your body to become dehydrated, meaning you lose too much water, by causing you to urinate or go to the toilet more often. Even just one drink of alcohol can start causing you to

lose water. For every 10 milliliters of alcohol you drink you likely will urinate 100 milliliters more.²⁰ Dehydration (loss of water) can cause lots of problems like headaches, heartburn, back pain and joint pains, and many other health problems.

- **Strokes:** Alcohol increases the risk of strokes. One study showed that people ages 16-40 years' old who drank 2-3 alcoholic drinks were more likely to have a stroke within 24 hours than those who did not drink. Men were 6 times more likely and women 7.8 times more likely to have a stroke after drinking alcohol. Another study found that even those who drank very little alcohol (1-14 ounces or 30-414 milliliters) a month were two times more likely to have a stroke caused by bleeding in the brain, than those who drank no alcohol.²¹
- **High Blood pressure:** Drinking alcohol can cause high blood pressure. Even as little as two or three drinks a day increases a person's chance of getting high blood pressure by 40%.²²
- **Higher Rates of Miscarriage:** Multiple studies have showed that women who drink alcohol are more likely to have a baby die before it is born. Even as little as 1 drink a week make it more likely the baby will die while the woman is pregnant.²³

- **Drinking alcohol does not make a man more manly. Actually drinking alcohol makes a man less manly.** A man drinking as little as 1-2 drinks of alcohol per day will have less testosterone in his body. Testosterone is a hormone or chemical the body makes which causes men to be men. It causes things like a deeper voice, larger muscles and also hair to grow on the face.²⁴

There are many, many other bad effects of drinking alcohol. But of course we can't talk about all of them in this short book. But I hope by now you have seen enough to see why it is so dangerous. The question then is, "Is there any amount of alcohol that is safe to drink?"

How Much Alcohol Is Safe?

Many people have thought that small amounts of alcohol are safe and won't be a problem. But the studies now are clear. There is no level that can be considered safe. One study published in 2018 said it this way:

*"Alcohol use is a leading risk factor for disease burden worldwide, accounting for nearly **10% of global deaths** among populations aged 15–49 years... **Our results show that the safest level of drinking is none.**"²⁵*

So among people in the age category of 15-49 years, one out of every 10 people that die, dies because of alcohol. That is a lot of people to die of one single cause. And now scientist know that no amount of alcohol is safe for use.

Police, towing companies, paramedics and other people who have to deal with car accidents have said for many years that no amount of alcohol is safe for drivers to drink. Even if you don't have enough alcohol in your blood to be legally drunk you are more likely to have a car accident. *"In other words, there is no 'safe' amount of alcohol to drink before driving. A person is more likely to get into an accident even after consuming [drinking] just one drink."*²⁶

In fact, in 2020, in the USA, more than 2,000 people were killed in car accidents caused by people who had less alcohol in their blood than what is legally allowed.²⁷

Yet, despite the fact that the facts state no amount of alcohol is safe, people still continue to believe that small amounts are okay for them to drink. Sadly, they are deceived.

The Bible warned about this years ago. It says;

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging [loud and violent]: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." (Proverbs 20:1)

The Bible used the word deceived. To deceive someone means to make them believe something that is false, or not true. God warned that wine would deceive. People would

think it was something good, but it is deceiving them. God himself declared it a mocker and said it would bring woe and sorrow. He said it would bite like a snake. Baby poisonous snakes, however cute they may look, are still dangerous and still have a poisonous bite.

The Bible teaches us if we would pass big tests, we must be faithful in the small tests (**Luke 16:10**). No one ever became an alcoholic or drunkard by never drinking alcohol. But many people have become drunkards because they started drinking small amounts of alcohol. Those small amounts made them want more and more until their lives were ruined.

What Are The Eternal Effects Of Alcohol?

In addition to the health risks of alcohol, it may not just cause sickness or death with a person's physical body but it can cause them to lose their eternal life.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian church:

"...Be not deceived: neither fornicators ... Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, ... shall inherit the kingdom of God." (**1 Corinthians 6:9, 10**)

In **Galatians 5:19-21** he listed being drunk as a work of the flesh and again said *"they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."*

So the Bible is clear. Those who are drunkards will not be saved unless they repent and turn away from this sin. But not only does the Bible warn us from being drunk, it also warns against being in the company of other drinkers. Especially for those who are struggling with being addicted to alcohol, being around other people who are drinking alcohol can be a problem for them.

*"But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, ...**or a drunkard**...with such an one no not to eat."* (1 Corinthians 5:11)

"Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way. Be not among winebibbers; [or "Keep not company with drunkards"²⁸]...—(Proverbs 23:19, 20)

When writing to the Ephesian Church, Paul told them to *"be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit."* (**Ephesians 5:18**) The Greek word which is translated "excess" here doesn't mean "too much" like people think it does, but the word "excess" is describing an unholy, sinful lifestyle.²⁹ So the verse says not to drink alcohol which causes a sinful lifestyle but instead we are to be filled with the Holy Spirit. This is the same as Galatians 5 which also puts being drunk as the opposite of having the Spirit. They don't go together. You cannot be possessed by alcohol and the Holy Spirit. This is why John the Baptist who was filled with the Holy Spirit never drank alcohol (**Luke 1:15**). Our bodies are the temple for the Holy Spirit and in

order to glorify God we must not do things that defile or destroy our bodies.

"Know ye [you] not that ye are the temple of God, ... If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy..." (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17)

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20)

Over and over again, Christians are commanded to be sober. The Greek word translated sober means *"to abstain [to refuse or choose not to have] from wine."*³⁰

Christians are told not to use alcohol so they will be watching and on guard against the devil's temptations.

"Be sober, be vigilant [be on the lookout for danger]; because your adversary [enemy] the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour [eat]:" (1 Peter 5:8)

Christians are called the children of light and not of the night or darkness. They are told to be sober and not to be drunken.

"Ye [you] are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness."

*Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and **be sober**. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, **be sober**, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."*
(1 Thessalonians 5:5-8)

Two Types Of Wine In The Bible

Some may be wondering now, why there are verses in the Bible that talk about wine as though it were something good. Anyone who has thoroughly studied the Bible will see that there are clearly two kinds of wine.

The wine that is a mocker, that deceives, and causes woe and sorrow, cannot be the same as that which is called a blessing.

"Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all." **(Isaiah 65:8)**

Notice that the new wine that contains a blessing is found in the cluster of grapes. What type of wine is found in the cluster of grapes?

"And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine was before me; And in the vine were three branches... and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes: And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand." (**Genesis 40:9-11**)



Here the chief butler dreamed of a grape vine that grew clusters of ripe grapes. The butler took these grapes and squeezed out the juice into Pharaoh's (the king of Egypt) cup. So what the king of Egypt was drinking was fresh grape juice. Although this dream had a meaning, the butler was dreaming what he was used to doing. In Bible times, many of the rich people had fresh grapes on the table and their servants would squeeze out the juice into their cups in front of them. They would then drink the fresh juice. This fresh juice was what they called "new wine" and also sometimes "sweet wine" and also sometimes they just called it "wine."

It was unfermented wine or grape juice that Jesus and the disciples would have used at the Lord's supper, since the Lord's supper was eaten at the time of Passover. At Passover time the people of Israel had to put all leaven or

yeast out of their houses (**Exodus 12:18, 19**). It is yeast that creates the fermentation in wine that makes it alcoholic. Many Jewish leaders, and also people who have studied the history and the culture of Bible times have said that alcoholic wine was not allowed at Passover time. So it could not have been what Jesus used for the Lord's supper.

31

It also was not fermented or alcoholic wine that Jesus turned the water into. The people at the wedding feast had already been drinking "wine" for a while before they ran out of it. If at this point Jesus had made alcoholic wine it would



most definitely have caused some of those people to become drunk, which is a sin. Jesus came to save people from their sin (**Matthew 1:21**). It would have been against His mission to save people if he caused people to become drunkards. Jesus did not cause people to sin. Jesus also warned against causing people to fall into sin

(**Matthew 18:7**). Why would He say it was wrong to cause people to sin, but then do something Himself which would cause people to sin?

Not only does the Bible show that Jesus would not have made alcoholic wine, a Jewish rabbi from the 1700s said,

*"The Jews **do not**, in their feasts for sacred purposes, including the marriage feast, **ever use any kind of fermented drinks**... Fermentation is to them a symbol of corruption..."³²*

Unlike alcohol which hurts and destroys the body, unfermented grape juice has good health benefits and can sometimes be used as a medicine for some health problems. This would be why Paul would tell Timothy to drink wine or unfermented grape juice as medicine for his stomach problems and other health issues (**1 Timothy 5:23**).

Conclusion

The Bible is clear, alcoholic wine is deadly. It is like a snake. It causes woe and sorrow. It deceives. True science agrees with what the Bible has said. Alcohol is a dangerous and deadly poison causing all sorts of health problems. It hurts our heart, liver, stomach, immune system, and much, much more. And worst of all it slowly destroys the brain, the mind.

Is this snake called alcohol in your home? Has it bitten you? Are you suffering the bad effects of its dangerous poison? If it is in your home, throw it out now, stay away from it!

And if it has bitten you and you are dying from its poison then go to Jesus. When Israel was in the wilderness and began to be bitten by poisonous snakes because of their sins, God told Moses to put a brass snake on a pole. Those that had been bitten, if they looked to the snake on the pole they would be healed (**Numbers 21:6-9**). That snake on the pole was to represent Jesus winning the battle over sin (**John 3:14, 15**) when He died on the cross for our sins. He died to save us from our sins. No matter how low you have fallen, how far alcohol has dragged you down, Jesus still loves you. He wants you to give yourself to Him, just as you are. He will not turn you away (**John 6:37**).

Confess your sins to Him and ask Him for forgiveness (**1 John 1:9**). Ask Him to give you the strength to leave your alcohol. Turn away from your alcohol and don't look back (**Isaiah 55:7**). Jesus will give you the victory and keep you from falling (**1 Corinthians 15:57; Jude 24**). Ask Him for the victory, claim His promises, and then believe He has given you the victory and you will have it (**Mark 11:24**).

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