

THE USE OF FERMENTED WINE FORBIDDEN IN SCRIPTURE.

FROM AN ARTICLE BY REV. J. M. FOSTER.

The Bible speaks of two kinds of wine, the one unfermented, the other fermented; the one a blessing, the other a curse; the one a symbol of good, the other a symbol of evil. A careful induction of the facts clearly establishes this position. It is the key to this whole vexed question. Take the *unfermented* wine. In a multitude of Old Testament passages wine is used in connection with temporal blessings promised to the Jews. Eight different Hebrew words are used in these passages, and they every one mean the unfermented contents of the grape, either before or after it is expressed. Yayin—the liquid or solid produce of the vine; Tirosh—the vine-fruit before being trodden; Soveh—a rich, thick, and boiled wine, being more of a jelly than a liquid; Shemarin—preserves or sweet-meats at Eastern banquets; Khemer—unfermented wine in natural state; Ahsis—fresh sweet juice as it issues from the trodden cluster; Ashishah—pressed cakes of grapes; Shakar—the sweet juice of fruits. These are all the words for wine used in connection with *blessings* and not one of them contains the least shadow of fermentation. It is unfermented wine all the while. This is the wine in Isaac's prophecy concerning Jacob, "plenty of corn and wine;" in Jacob's prediction of Judah, "washing his garments in wine, his eyes shall be red with wine and his teeth white with milk;" in the blessing of the "corn, the wine, and the oil;" and in the prospect of drinking "the pure blood of the grape." This is the wine used in the Canticles, "I have mingled my wine with my milk." It is the wine used by the prophet, "come, buy wine and milk." And it is the Saviour's "new wine, that must be put into new bottles." Take the *fermented* wine. It is ever used in Scripture as a symbol of *evil* and divine wrath. This is indisputable in such phrases as, "the wine of astonishment;" "in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture;" "The cup of his fury—the cup of trembling;" "The wine cup of this fury;" "Babylon is a golden cup; the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad;" "I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling;" Babylon "made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication;" "the wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation;" and "the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." The use of *fermented* wine is positively and absolutely forbidden in the Scriptures. The *Priests* were forbidden to use it when they ministered before the Lord. And will it not necessarily follow that in these New Testament times, when all God's people are kings and priests unto God, that all are prohibited from the use of intoxicating drinks? Jewish *rulers* were forbidden to use it. "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes strong drink." This is a standing law for all civil rulers in all time. *Bishops* or *ministers* and deacons were "not to be given to wine." All were positively forbidden to use it. "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its bubble in the cup." No one can question the universal obligation of this command. It is