383 Wine (*Vinum*)

Through wine sometimes grace is designated. For just as wine is sharp, warming, and giving joy; so with the coming of grace it pricks the heart to penitence, Psal. [59:5]: “You have made us drink wine of sorrow.”

Again, it warms through charity, Psal. [38:4]: “My heart grew hot within me.”

¶ Third, it exults through the joyous matter of holiness, Psal. [103:15]: “Wine may cheer the heart of man.” For as in the misdeed conscience gnaws, so in the good deed joy is generated. Wherefore Augustine, in *Enchiridion*,[[1]](#endnote-1) it is true liberty on account of the joy of something done right, so also it is pious service on account of the obedience received.

¶ However it is to be known here that good wine corrupts in four ways: the adverse nature of the container, the atmospheric condition of the air, the shock of breaking, the mixture of the fluid. Therefore, Christ served wine prudently with the cleanness of the container, Tob. 3[:16]: “I have kept my soul clean.”

Second, diligently for the quality of the air, Prov. 22[:17]: “Apply your heart to my doctrine,” which is for you.

Third, quietness from the concussion or disturbance of sound, Eccli. 10[:31]: “My son, keep your soul in meekness.”

Fourth, discrete against the admixture of evil, Eccli. 37[:9]: “Beware of an evil counsellor.” And James [2:10]:

¶ “Whosoever shall offend in one point, is become guilty of all.” Therefore, for this that wine is good is required that it is becoming in color, fresh in taste, breathing with fragrance, and helping with vigor.

Concerning the first, Prov. 23[:31]: “Look not upon the wine when it shines in the glass.”

¶ Concerning the second, Can. 1[:1, 3]: “Your breasts are better than wine … we will run to the odor of thy ointments.”

Concerning the third, Num. 28[:14]: “Libations of wine are to be poured out for every victim.”

Concerning the fourth, [1] Esdras 3[:10]: “Wine is strong.” And Eccli. 31[:35]: “Wine was created from the beginning to make men joyful, and not to make them drunk.” Psal. [103:15]: “Wine may cheer the heart of man.” And Prov. [31:6]: “Give strong drink to them that are sad.”

Again, wine in his taverns the devil envies God. Of which the first is infection. The second is suspect. The third is choice. The devil in his tavern sets fourth wine triply.

First, the wine of suggestion offered which sells by its color because under the species of wine he furnishes poison. For everything that shines is not gold, Prov. 23[:31]: “Look not upon the wine when the color thereof shines in the glass: it goes in pleasantly,” etc.

Second, the wine of delight is taken because it deceives by sweetness when one consents to temptation on account of delight, just as a bird is captured in the snare on account of the grain, Prov. 21[:17]: “He that loves wine, and fat things, shall not be rich.” And Isai. 5[:22]: “Woe to you that are mighty to drink wine,” etc.

Third, the wine of evil is for the damned which kills from its power, because it is so strong that when the old drink it, he dies eternally, Amos 2[:8]: They gave “the wine of the condemned in the house.” And Deut. 32[:33]: “Their wine is the gall of dragons, and the venom of asps, which is incurable.”

Again, the world in its tavern sets forth a triple wine.

Of this the first is vanity in honors, [1] Esdr. 3[:18]: “O men, how much wine conquers these who drink it,” etc. Literally, just as the drunkard is disdained to have a dominion or mastership or even poverty, so the proud, Psal. [68:13]: “They that sat in the gate spoke against me: and they that drank wine made me their song.”

Second, the wine of the world is pleasure in delights, Eph. 5[:18]: “Be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury.” And Venus in the wine has been fire in fire,[[2]](#endnote-2) Eccli. 19[:2]: “Wine and women make wise men fall off.”

¶ Third, the wine of the world is falsity in riches because it promises prosperity and encloses adversity. Drunkards reckon themselves richer and safer than others, but when wine is digested, then they say something else, Haba. 2[:5]: “As wine deceives him that drinks it: so, shall the proud man be.”

Again, God in his tavern serves a triple wine. Of which the first is contrition which heals one’s own sin, and it is as if pressed and sharp and hard for drinking, Psal. [59:5]: “You have shown your people hard things; you have made us drink wine of sorrow.”

The second wine is compassion which heals another blemish which is as if wine mixed from one’s own mercy and another’s wretchedness, Luke 10[:34] the Samaritan poured in wine and oil.

Third is the wine of devotion which gladdens God and is sweetest on account of the internal sweetness, Can. 5[:1]: “I have drunk my wine with my milk.” In Eccli. 40[:20]: “Wine and music rejoice the heart” of man.

The third wine is of the wisdom of health which does not debilitate but fortifies the vision. For it is strong, mature, and clear, Zach. 9[:17]: “For what is the good thing of him, and what is his beautiful thing, but the corn of the elect, and wine springing forth virgins?” Material wine corrupts virgins, but that brings forth the spiritual, but there are many who water by flattery or too rigid in tithing, Isai. 1[:22]: “Your wine is mingled with water.” And these change wine into water.

The third wine is eternal beatitude which purges every misery and is the tastiest. Paul the Apostle tasted only that, and not only did he put a hood to it, but he fought against the head, Isai. 55[:1]: “Come; buy without money, and without any price.” Because good will suffices to him who has no more nor can have. Wine is joy, milk is the joy of humanity, Est. 1[:7]: “Wine also in abundance and of the best was presented, as was worthy of a king's magnificence.”

1. Augustine, *Enchiridion* 30 (PL 40:247): Ipsa est vera libertas propter recti facti laetitiam, simul et pia servitus propter praecepti obedientiam. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Ovid, *Ars amatoria* 244 (LCL 232:28-29): Et Venus in vinis ignis in igne fuit.

and Venus in the wine has been fire in fire. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)