

The Wahabis, followers of a fanatical Moslem heresy, had imposed their strict rules on easy and civilized Kasim. In Kasim there was but little coffee-hospitality, much prayer and fasting, no tobacco, no artistic dalliance with women, no silk clothes, no gold and silver head-ropes or ornaments. Everything was forcibly pious and forcibly puritanical."

-SEVEN PILLARS OF WISDOM¹
(Lawrence 1963:150)

"Emma, Joseph's wife, had been away to St. Louis on furniture buying trip. She returned to find the main room filled with guests, the majority of whom were crowded the length of a bright new counter upon which was displayed a variety of liquors; a scrubbed and combed Rockwell held forth behind the bar, busily filling glasses. Emma held her tongue until the visitors had departed, then flew into a tirade. "Joseph, what is the meaning of that bar in this house?"

-ORRIN PORTER ROCKWELL
(Schindler 1966:111)

25. COFFEE, TEA OR MILK?

¹From the same region of the world as this Kasim comes the lovely Eleventh Century poetry of Omar Khayyam, inspired by the fruit of the vine, his best known verse being:

"Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse - and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness-
And Wilderness is Paradise enow."

CHAPTER CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	308
NARCOTICS CONTROL	310
METHYL XANTHINES	311
XANTHINE PHARMACOLOGY	311
EARLY CHURCH HISTORY	312
MODERN MEDICAL SUPPORT FOR ALCOHOL USE:	314
NEW TESTAMENT SUPPORT FOR ALCOHOL USE:	314
SPIRITUAL MEANING	315
MMF AND PHARISEEISM	316
CONCLUSION	316

INTRODUCTION:

Coffee, (cocoa,) tea or milk? Or, chemically speaking, caffeine, theobromine, tannic acid or calcium? Is that what the Word of Wisdom is about - a directive about legally ingestible chemicals? I think not. But there's a lot of pap in Modern Mormon Folklore (MMF)² that alleges that in placing coffee off limits, the Father was saying not to use caffeine. The argument is backwards, really. But as a syllogism, it goes something like this:

1. **The health code proscribes the use of coffee.**
2. **Coffee contains caffeine.**
3. **Therefore, caffeine is proscribed.**

There is a fiber of logic to this facile argument, but it is fallacious. Some wise one³ has noted that all of God's commandments are spiritual in nature, so how is abstinence from caffeine -not coffee, a different sort of animal- a theological virtue? The truth is that it isn't the caffeine that is the issue here.

We claim that the underlying issue is a self-denial behavior. What we believe has happened in the 20th Century LDS church is that MMF has evolved and has discovered the 'explanation' for the proscription of coffee use in the 89 Section of the D & C. MMF has been unable to resist the temptation to do what the Lord has not done, provide such an explanation. This seems symptomatic of a need or insecurity that leads one to try to "explain" something spiritual in 'understandable' terms,⁴ But in the case of the caffeine doctrine, MMF has it wrong. We say this because we believe that there is, in fact, a profoundly important aspect of the 89th Section in terms of spirit metallurgy, but it is hidden

² It is essential to differentiate between attested doctrine on the one hand, and the complex folklore on the other, that springs up to fill the gaps between the widely-spaced doctrines. The LDS faith has its share of the latter and so compelling and pervasive are these myths and folk beliefs, that only rare individuals in the faith even attempt to identify them. They are given to us with our earliest training without any distinction between the two categories. The formal doctrine is termed Standard Mormon Doctrine (SMD) here, and the latter, Modern Mormon Folklore (MMF).

Any faith that depends heavily on personal revelation, and the concept of a concurrent God who actively stirs the mixture of our daily lives, is one ripe for exploitation by myth-makers, whether intentional or not. Virtually any small incident of our life can be given miraculous explanations, which when shared in the communal self-revealing testimony meetings, becomes a model for others to ponder and emulate. This sharing creates patterns for hearers who may consciously or unconsciously seek to experience or replicate an event that impressed them. And as this emulation and sharing progresses, cloaked by the sacredness conferred on anything spoken in a testimony meeting, folklore is legitimized. Thereby, it assumes the rank of official doctrine which unthinking people faithfully accept without question.

That is what has happened to the Caffeine Doctrine discussed in this article.

³ Actually, this is from the D & C.

⁴ Sort of like the compulsion leading to this book!

from view by MMF's fixation of the nastiness of caffeine.⁵

NARCOTICS CONTROL:

A basic question to raise here about the Caffeine Doctrine revolves around some basic pharmacology. To set up the argument, let's take as a model the class of drugs called narcotics which includes some old standbys like morphine, codeine, heroin, as well as a group of newer ones like fentanyl, etc.⁶ This is a group of chemicals that share similar pharmacological effects, i.e. pain relief, euphoria, sense of well-being, dependence, cardiovascular effects, decreased responsiveness by the brainstem to carbon dioxide, etc. These effects result from the chemical structure of the molecules and their interaction with the nervous system. And some of them are so profoundly dependence-creating, both psychologically and physically, that users can deteriorate as human beings into unproductive creatures whose major purpose becomes maintenance of the habit, with a concomitant decline into lawlessness necessitated by the need to 'earn' \$1,000+ a day to support the habit.

To curb the growth of this population, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) was created and empowered to promulgate stringent standards that must be complied with as these chemicals are manufactured, distributed and dispensed. Even the process of prescribing them is stringently regulated. A physician who wishes to prescribe them must obtain a specific DEA license to do so. Then he must use a three-part federal narcotic prescription form to order these drugs, with each of the three parts going to specifically defined locations. Then the pharmacist can only fill one of these prescriptions if all of the necessary information is on it, it is not too old, it shows no evidence of alteration, etc. Variations from these regulations can incur significant penalties from the DEA which employs FBI investigators to enforce and police these regulations.

If a new narcotic is created, it will be placed on this list

⁵ I know I am jousting with windmills here. But I must. There is a most unfortunate error being made in the LDS culture today in this regard. People lose sight of the significant self-denial doctrine of this section, and focus instead on the chemicals. And then they have the caffeine question wrong anyway. Then the kids start to get confused, and this then makes them cynical about other doctrines or about the leaders, etc. All because of the incredibly powerful currents within the culture that makes caffeine use a sin of the same magnitude as drunkenness, immorality, etc.

SMD considers it anathema for a non-leader to be so bold as to suggest that leadership ought to do such-and-such, but I do believe that the general authorities would relieve a tremendous and unnecessary burden of confusion and guilt from the general membership if they would screw up their courage and tell the truth, that the 89th section has nothing to do with caffeine, that using it is OK. From an uncle who used to hobnob with these men in SLC, it is evident that some of them enjoy their coke, so why not just let the secret out of the bag?

⁶ If the reader shies from logical arguments about doctrinal matter, this section will be offensive. But if one concedes that logic just may be characteristic of the gospel, and allow that it is OK for mortals to even try and discover that logic, then this model is going to be viewed favorably.

of controlled substances.⁷ It must be manufactured, distributed and marketed in accordance with these stringent regulatory controls. It seems appropriate and reasonable that any new member of this chemical class would be handled just like any other member of the class. Wouldn't it seem irrational to say morphine can be marketed over the counter, but that heroin can't, or to allow a new designer analogue of fentanyl to be legally sold in the street while heroin can't? The answers to these questions are self evident. All members of this class of chemicals must be treated in the same manner.

METHYL XANTHINES:

So what's the relevance of this to coffee, tea or chocolate? Simply this. Caffeine also belongs to a particular class of drugs, which class is termed "methyl xanthines" or "methylated xanthines." This fact is known to some degree within the LDS faith, but it is generally ignored, which is a bit like the famous ostrich hiding technique. Just as the members of the class of narcotics share among themselves certain properties, the members of this class also share chemical and pharmacological properties, which we will now review briefly.

First, there is another, though less well-known member of this group, which is called theobromine⁸. Is it familiar to you? It should be, because you ingest it every time you eat a candy bar with chocolate or drink hot chocolate, or eat anything that has real chocolate (not to be confused with carob) in it. Chocolate use is as widely practiced in our culture as is coffee use.

Second: if it is wrong to use one member of the class of xanthines, i.e. caffeine, then shouldn't it be equally wrong to use any other member of that class? Or is this class of drugs somehow different from the class of narcotics? Can we somehow "legally" use one member of this class in any quantity and any frequency, while we simultaneously eschew the use of another member of the group?

Given the pattern for the uniform handling of all members of the class of narcotics, one begins to suspect that the division of this class into acceptable and unacceptable groups by SMD is arbitrary, capricious, self-serving and unreasonable. What would be the rationale for allowing these drugs to be split into useable and unusable divisions, allowed and not-allowed groups, while not allowing the same type of division to be made in the narcotic

⁷ Obviously, the designers of new varieties of these drugs can evade control for a while, because the drug must be identified before it can be regulated. (And there is great profit to be gained - a shoe box full of a fentanyl analogue would have a street value in excess of \$1,000,000.00!) But this evasion is just that. The intention of the regulation is to include all related drugs.

⁸ Actually, this fact does seem to be fairly well known in the church, but what happens is that its meaning is denied, ignored, not understood, etc. I remember well when I first encountered this fact and asked my mom about it. She gave me a glib answer and I understood that the topic was not open to discussion. That is how SMD deals with this pesky problem.

group?⁹ It is more reasonable or logical to use all of them or to use none of them. To this author, fastidiously turning one's nose up at caffeine while gorging on chocolate, smacks of a severe case of phariseeitis.

XANTHINE PHARMACOLOGY:

But let's not leave it at that. Let's take a brief look at some of the actual pharmacology of these xanthines now. Caffeine is known by everyone as a drug that stimulates the central nervous system. 'NoDoz' and 'Dr. Pepper' take advantage of that property, as do some prescription and over-the-counter drugs.¹⁰ But does everyone also know the equally true fact that the primary target organ of theobromine is the myocardium, the heart itself¹¹? Since this is true, one then must ask why it is OK to rev up the heart with theobromine, but not the nerves with caffeine. If stimulation is wrong, it's wrong, or if it OK, it's ok. But we can't have it both ways. They are both members of the methyl xanthine group so should be treated in the same manner.

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY:

When MMF attempts to dredge up rationalizations for the 89th Section, something that really isn't necessary, and in fact is misguided, it opens up a wide range of curious questions that might best be left alone, especially from **its** point of view. But since the door has been opened, let's take a peek.

Look at the history of the health code for a minute. When the 89th section was written in 1833, the health problems associated with opiates and narcotics were known. One of the most famous examples was the scourge of opium which was present in England¹², on the continent and the U.S.. It was recognized as a source of

⁹ There is probably a significant segment of the population of the U.S. who would be glad if such a distinction could be made in the narcotics class! Witness the efforts expended to legalize cannabis, tetrahydrocannabinol, THC or whatever you wish to call it. It's not a narcotic, but it is one of the DEA-proscribed drugs that a segment of the population would like to legalize. This is also anathema to SMDers, but to me, it is irrational for us to allow alcohol to be legal and these other not. Alcohol is a vastly more debilitating drug ultimately, incurring enormous costs at all levels of society.

¹⁰ Does it strike you peculiar that an individual can purchase Excedrin and use it as often as s/he wishes and still consider himself a non-caffeine-user in the liturgical sense? Somehow that smacks of severe pharaseeitis. If caffeine comes packaged in a solid white form, labeled 'medicine', we can use it, but if it is in a brown liquid form -coffee or coke- it is 'bad.' In the case of Excedrin, there isn't even the rationalization that, "Well, the doctor made me do it!" We are simply choosing to ingest it. Would it really be any different if we drank a coke and took and aspirin with it instead taking an excedrin? They each contain approximately the same quantity of caffeine - 65mg.

¹¹ There have also been reports that chocolate stimulates the release of endorphin-like substances in the brain. This begins to sound suspiciously like the effects of opiates. Naughty, naughty.

¹² A recent article, with a comparable sounding title -"Coffee, Tea, or Opium?- sheds rather gruesome light on the role of England and the United States in spreading opium addiction world-wide in the 19th century. Samuel M. Wilson writes in NATURAL HISTORY, 11/93, page 74-79.

various sorts of problems, though it was not regulated for some time.

So if Brother Joseph was so astute, as MMF alleges him to be, to support their contention that caffeine was the sinful agent in coffee, why didn't he proscribe opium and cocaine as well?¹³ They were wreaking social havoc when he was alive, and he was probably aware of their effects. That would seem sort of short-sighted of him, wouldn't it, particularly in view of the fact that we know today that either cocaine or opium is a vastly more problematical substance socially, economically, etc. than caffeine will ever be.

Looking further around the 18th Century in the U.S., one notes that the social milieu in which this health code came into existence may have had some influence on the code itself. At least that is what one might argue if one takes contemporaneous events into account. For example, Dr. Milt Backman of BYU has indicated that the man who created Graham Crackers, one Dr. Graham, proscribed five, not four, substances, and did this a few years before Joseph did. Dr. Graham included Brother Joseph's four items, and included, unexpectedly, quinine. So if one insists on trying to find logical explanations for the listing of do's and don't's in the health code, s/he must account for this coincidence because it is relevant. This makes it look like Joseph was copying Dr. Graham, not that it's true, but if we indulge in the logic of MMF, we have to note that this is also a possible explanation for his proscription of those four items.

There is another curious sidelight to the history of "illicit" substances in the LDS church. Alcohol was on the proscribed list of things, but the early saints did continue to use wine in their sacrament services, as witnessed by the original language of the sacramental prayer on the 'wine'¹⁴. This was real alcoholic wine, not just the "fresh grape juice" which is so carefully described by uncertain sunday school teachers today. So what caused the early Saints to stop using it? According to Dr. Backman, it doesn't appear to have been a doctrinal concern about alcohol, rather it was based on a need to desist from trafficking with the gentiles who were their only source of wine¹⁵. This is an entirely reasonable, pragmatic, non-theological reason for so doing, but I bring it up to show that if we try to use human logic to explain the theology of the 89th section, we run afoul of all sorts of

¹³ In fact when Coca Cola was first marketed it DID in fact contain cocaine. That is where the 'coke' part of the name derived. Cocaine was dropped from the formula as it was controlled.

One is led to speculate about whether this fact somehow contributed, in early church history, to the concern for putting Coca Cola on the list of proscribed things. It SHOULD have been proscribed when it contained cocaine, but as cocaine was dropped from the beverage, another explanation had to be found by the next generations that didn't know about the role of cocaine. So caffeine would be a lovely chemical to accuse as the reason 'good' mormons shouldn't drink it. I don't know that this is what happened, but it may be.

¹⁴ See Section 20, verse 79 of the Doctrine and Covenants and the B of M.

¹⁵ This is attested in the D & C itself where the Lord counsels the Saints "to not purchase wine neither strong drink of your enemies." (27:3)

funny little things¹⁶.

Allow me one more historical vignette before we leave this section. The second quote on the title page of this article is from the University of Utah's Harold Schindler. According to him, Orrin Porter himself did bartending for Brother Joseph in Brother Joseph's frontroom. That doesn't sound like the 89th section was being rigorously enforced. And according to Dr. Backman, Brother Joseph discovered that if he were to enforce the health code, he would have found himself citing the majority of the saints who used one or more of the four black-listed substances.¹⁷

MODERN MEDICAL SUPPORT FOR ALCOHOL USE:

It is a delightful paradox to note that if one wishes to extend this MMF past-time of finding 'logical' reasons from modern 'science' to support its contentions, it is also possible in the 1990's to find research information to SUPPORT the use of moderate amounts of alcohol. There are studies which demonstrate that caffeine ingestion 45 minutes prior to vigorous exercise produces beneficial effects, and even increases exercise tolerance. And information is now finding its way into the popular press about something that pathologists have known for a long time: alcohol usage tends to protect coronary arteries by keeping them free of

¹⁶ There are two other conspicuous examples of profoundly deep shifts in doctrinal positions within SMD which create comparable opportunities for this sort of rationalization engaged in by MMF. One was the granting of priesthood to blacks in the mid-70's. Within the context of the social and racial milieu of that era, insiders and outsiders had a grand time 'explaining' why the LDS leaders made this change at that precise time.

The other, older example is polygamy. That is a clear case of the orthodoxy caving in to political pressures. Personally, I think it was just fine to stop the polygamy so that the prophet could come out of hiding in the Juarez Colonies to lead the faith. And especially personally, I am glad it was stopped for any reason because it is a bizarre doctrine.

Anyway. Attempts to rationalize doctrines are risky business.

¹⁷ Dr. Backman also noted that Orrin Porter Rockwell retained his taste for hard liquor in the Utah territory. He apparently preferred a liquor dispensing wayhouse which was located at Point of the Mountain at the south end of the Salt Lake valley where the present Utah State Penitentiary is situated. Nice piece of poetic justice, that.

The point, though, is that the saints in Utah continued to use illicit substances after their migration. And it was not until the last two generations that it has been rigorously enforced. However, the enforcement seems to err on the side of hair-splitting over caffeine, ignoring the other aspects of the 89th section like weight control, meat consumption, amount of sleep, etc.

R L Dewey is even more explicit about Porter's involvement in the wayhouse:

"...he [ed.Porter] purchased sixteen additional acres near Point of the Mountain...Here he constructed a tavern/hotel...The bar was later added January 1861, but by August, 1860 the premises had been titled 'Hot Spring Brewery Hotel'...(there was) a brewery capable of making 500 gallons of beer per day..."
(1986:246)

The references for these transactions are apparently unimpeachable, and will be briefly noted here, details being provided in the complete bibliography:

- Utah County Deeds, 1851-1864.
- William Marsden, Inspector of Spirituous Liquors and Beer
- Journal History, August 29, 1860

Does any of this really matter in the final analysis? No. The 89th Section is about spiritual attributes and laws, not chemicals. We merely bring these things in to try to persuade you -if you need persuading- that MMF has turned the telescope around and agonizes over trivia, missing the meaning of the health code.

plaque.¹⁸

If you use non-theological reasons to justify and explain the 89th Section, you have a problem here because there is clear non-theological (medical) evidence that demonstrates that moderate, daily intake of alcohol protects the cardiovascular system, and decreases the risk of heart attack. So if you really are worried about ensuring optimal health of your coronary arteries, which you ought to be in order to prolong your life so that you can do even more 'good', you can now argue that you should start using a bit of red wine with your meals. The apparent mechanism for the protective action of alcohol is simple. It decreases the tendency of platelet to aggregate, as does aspirin, which in turn, decreases the rate of mural plaque formation, a prominent feature of atherosclerosis.

NEW TESTAMENT SUPPORT FOR ALCOHOL USE:

Perhaps the most delightful paradox in this business of MMF finding 'explanations' is the evidence from the New Testament which might be taken to be doctrinal support for moderate alcohol use. Obviously, alcohol isn't caffeine, but this paragraph is humorous in this context.

First evidence: the first recorded miracle of the Christ Himself was to turn water into wine at the wedding, real alcoholic wine. If it were morally reprehensible to use alcohol, I doubt He would have done that. Don't you agree?

Second, recall that Paul counseled Timothy to use a little wine for the frequent infirmities of his stomach. That's a significant counterpoint to MMF which is blithely overlooked. Paul evidently believed that wine had a medicinal effect and encouraged Timothy to avail himself of it. Certainly Paul knew of the drunkenness caused by alcohol, as his laundry lists of sins repeatedly demonstrate, but he had no problem encouraging a small amount for medical reasons. The point is that Paul did not find it contradictory or sinful to do this.

So MMF runs afoul of the New Testament in this case because it makes a big theological deal out of alcohol. Why was moderate alcohol use not a sin then, but is today?¹⁹ Does the standard of what's wrong change? I think not. I think not. If anything has changed, it may be the social milieu in which modern man finds

¹⁸ But it can wreak havoc on the liver, depending on the quantity used and length it is used. Years ago, during an autopsy that a VA pathologist did on a 60 year old alcoholic for my students, he sectioned the heart and traced the coronaries for them. They were clean. No plaque. However, the liver was a mis-shapen, tan-colored, hobnailed-surface mass that he said was unable to perform its function, and which was the cause of death. He attributed the clear coronaries in this 60 year old, as well as the hobnail liver, to alcohol, and estimated that it took \$10,000 in alcohol to produce such a liver. The students obviously wanted to know where the boundary was between too much and just enough alcohol. The pathologist couldn't say.

¹⁹ I trust the reader understands here that I am simply demonstrating the fallacy of hunting for logical reasons for the language of the 89th section. I am not arguing for the use of alcohol. But logic extends in many directions. It is a double-edged sword. Treating theological pronouncements as being susceptible of logical proof is risky business, as I have demonstrated elsewhere by example!

himself.

SPIRITUAL MEANING:

In spite of the confusion created in MMF, the real meaning of the 89th section is a spiritual one, and the first quote on the title page of the article shows it remarkably well. Lawrence, none other than the "Lawrence of Arabia"²⁰, who was a brilliant non-conformist, points out that there is some sort of relationship between abstention from coffee and a variety of other behaviors which turn out to be important ones to the LDS faith. He did not endorse those related behavioral constraints, but that is beside the point. The point is that he recognized that there IS some sort of relationship between them and coffee use. This is an astonishing observation coming from this source, and it does more to explain the meaning of the 89th section than any of the current MMF pap about caffeine. Abstinence from using coffee in the modern world makes one a peculiar person, and being peculiar is something that the Lord apparently wants of us.

While my wife and I were in the Amazon Basin in the Peace Corps, living among blended²¹ populations where there was no knowledge of the LDS faith, coffee was the medium of hospitality. Every dirt-poor family had access to coffee bushes and they all gathered and roasted coffee beans over their open cooking fires. And when one visited a hovel, there was always an offer of a demitasse of sugary coffee. To refuse it was to be rude at worst, and abnormal at least. We begged off by lamely citing the inevitable "liver problems", but the excuse was seen for what it was and our hosts felt ill-at-ease. In a similar fashion, while I was in Finland serving a mission, coffee was also the medium of hospitality. Around the world, coffee figures prominently in meeting and greeting ceremonies. So we believe that the point of no coffee or tea is to, first, simply make us a peculiar people²² and second, to tie us more readily to those other abstinence behaviors noted above by Lawrence.

²⁰ He was a world-class Arabist who found himself in the British Forces in that part of the world during World War II. He single-handedly led a group of grumbling Arab tribes across the Negev to seize Aqaba from the astonished Turks who never anticipated attack from that direction, the Negev being what it is. This victory turned around the fortunes of that theatre, ending with the occupation of Damascus. If you are interested in this extraordinary story -which is much more spell-binding than the movie- read SEVEN PILLARS OF WISDOM by himself.

²¹ The blend consisting of Amerindian, West African and Portuguese bloods.

²² For some readers it may be interesting to discover that other faiths have also regarded themselves as "peculiar". Note this quote:

"Perhaps he had been born and bred among serious dissenters, seeing salvation in Jesus only and abhorring the vain pomps of the establishment. Had he felt the need of an implicit faith amid the welter of sectarianism and the jargon of its turbulent schisms, six principle men, peculiar people, seed and snake baptists, supralapsatian dogmatists?" (Joyce PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN, p. 189)

Note here the 'welter of sectarianism' and schisms which was the same type of environment that Brother Joseph found himself in, with the same sort of mind-numbing results.

MMF AND PHARISEEISM:

What has unfortunately happened is that MMF has entered into the same sort of mindgames as the pharisees. It has sought meticulous explanations and justifications that can be applied to the coffee proscription. Unfortunately, it is phariseeism of the worst sort and a good share of LDS cannot see that, so either foolishly and mindlessly accept the myth, or else don't accept it, but are confused about it and feel guilty about using caffeine.²³

CONCLUSION:

We have seen one young man get it right, however. When he discovered the relationship of the active drugs in both coffee and chocolate, i.e. they are members of the same class of drugs, he recognized the inconsistency of using one drug, but not the other. Then, given the fact that coffee is off-limits according to Section 89, he concluded that he best cease using chocolate. That's commendable, not because he would be endangering his body or soul by using the substances, rather because he saw the flaw in the split-screen version of the 89th Section preached by MMF, so he chose not to be inconsistent.

The abstinence from use of coffee (not caffeine) and tea (not tannic acid) and alcohol, alters our spirit matter in some way. There is nothing mystical about it: any exercise of free agency in the direction of discipline always alters spirit matter.²⁴ Another probably benefit of abstinence from these things is that one essentially creates barriers between himself and some potentially undesirable situation.²⁵ That's the point of the behaviors, both proscribed and encouraged²⁶. The proscribed substances figure in

²³ The medicinal use of alcohol and caffeine raises an interesting issue. When a physician prescribes these substances, they are acceptable within SMD, although an individual cannot choose by himself to use them medicinally. The issue this raises is: if medicinal use is acceptable, then there must not be any intrinsic moral problem with these substances.

What I mean is best shown by considering sexual behaviors. I seriously doubt that medical prescriptions for proscribed sexual activities, which ARE prescribed by some psychologists and psychiatrists, would be tolerated by the authorities of the Church. And if this speculation be true, the reason must be that the latter involve behaviors which are proscribed for moral reasons. I suppose I could be wrong, but I doubt it. To me this distinction indicates that caffeine use is not a moral sin. (This also sounds like phariseeism!)

²⁴ Remember the Propositions. This is one of the four.

²⁵ This is a curious point from the perspective of obedience: are we truly demonstrating obedience if we don't sin simply because we haven't had the chance to sin? Put differently, if we never are offered alcohol in an anonymous setting where noone knows us, hence the likelihood of exposure is zero, we really don't know whether we willingly obeyed. Do we? So is the absence of transgression to be construed as incontrovertible evidence of what decision we would make in all related situations where sin of a sort was possible?

²⁶ Once again, we note that Tantric Buddhism shares similar beliefs. Avalon notes (1978:594-6) that wine is forbidden because it was found "to be productive of great evils, and was thrice cursed by Brahma, Shukracarya and Krishna. "The drinking of wine is one of the great sins (Mahapataka), involving expiation (Prayascitta), and otherwise leading the sinner to that great hell in which the slayer of a Brahmana is confined." "In ancient Vaidik times, meat was eaten" but then came to be prohibited. And grains became commonly used for food. Of particular note, in this same section of his book, Avalon discusses Tantric rules regarding sexual intercourse, noting that it eschews not only the improper performance of the act, but

meeting and greeting ceremonies, or in social customs and behaviors, and the Lord chose to make His people peculiar by disallowing them from using them.

all eight types of thought (as defined by them) related thereto. Contrary to popular belief, Tantrism is decidedly not a faith which grants sexual license, rather is more explicit in its control thereof than Christianity. Only the Christ approached their degree of specificity, when he referred to thoughts being the same as acts. But we mention the latter moral issue because Avalon includes it with his discussion of health codes, suggesting to us that he, too, saw the deeper relationships that are alluded to by Lawrence, etc.

Avalon indicates that meat was also considered to be a forbidden substance for advanced members of the vamacara division. (1978:165) The 89th Section also eschews meat use in excess.