



SMOKING AND VAPING: - UNCLEAN -

SMOKING AND VAPING: UNCLEAN

By George Lujack

Many believers smoke cigarettes, cigars, marijuana, pipes, and/or vape. Most of Judaism considers smoking a health violation of Torah (law), because smoking violates prohibitions against damaging one's health and endangering one's life. This article will discuss Scripture and smoking, some of the dangers of smoking, which include weakened, tarred lungs, smoker's cough, various cancers, and shortened lifespans.

In 1976, the Sephardic Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv Rabbi Hayim David Halevy , declared tobacco smoking to be a violation of Jewish law. In 2006, the Vaad Halacha (Jewish Law Committee), sponsored by the Rabbinical Council of America, ruled that smoking is forbidden, reversing precedents that permitted smoking.¹ 2006 is better late than never! Some Jews of Haredi communities disagree and permit smoking, but all forbid smoking on the Sabbath and on holidays, because it involves creating a fire in violation of (Exodus 35:3).

There always has been something peculiar and odd about observing a Jewish person, who would never eat a ham sandwich, smoking a cigarette. Scripture does not list every possible activity that is detrimental to human health. Did Scripture remain silent about something as widespread and popular as smoking, in all of its many forms, a dirty, toxic, and deadly vice, that this practice went unmentioned all throughout Scripture?

BRANCH TO THE NOSE

EZEKIEL 8:17 (NKJV):

And He said to me, “Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it a trivial thing to the house of Judah to commit the abominations which they commit here? For they have filled the land with violence; then they have returned to provoke Me to anger. Indeed they *put the branch* to their nose.*

***twig (TLV).**

The prevailing concensus among most historians and theologians is that putting the branch to the nose is a Hebrew idiom meaning either thumbing their nose at God, God’s nostrils kindling at sin, or some type of idolatrous sun worship involving twigs. Most theologians do not believe putting the branch to their nose is a reference to smoking. Scripture often uses metaphors rather than literal, direct language.

ACTS 5:30 (NKJV):

The God of our fathers raised up Yeshua (Jesus) whom you murdered by hanging on a tree.

Yeshua (Jesus) was crucified on a Roman wooden cross that was *derived* from a tree. Yeshua (Jesus) was not crucified and hung on an actual tree. Regardless of the meaning of putting the branch to the nose in Ezekiel 8:17, when a person smokes, they are literally taking tobacco or marijuana cultivated leaves , from a tobacco or marijuana branch and putting it to their nose, lighting it, and inhaling deadly toxins into their lungs. When someone smokes or vapes, they metaphorically put the branch to their nose and inhale toxic substances into their lungs.

A SWEET AROMA TO THE LORD

Many clean meat and grain burnt offerings made by fire offered a sweet aroma to YHWH (the Lord) (Exodus 29:18,25,41; Leviticus 1:9,13,17, 2:2, 3:5,16, 4:31, 6:15,21, Leviticus 8:21,28, 17:6, 23:13,18; Numbers 15:3,7,10,13,14,24, 18:17, 28:6,8,13,24,27; Numbers 29:2,8,13,36).

YHWH (the Lord) never commanded or permitted the Hebrews to burn tobacco, marijuana, and/or any other toxic fume plant or substance.

SMOKING AND VAPING: NO HEALTH OR MORAL EQUIVALENCY TO ALCOHOL USE

An argument smokers often make is that smoking and vaping is no worse than alcohol use and while smoking causes lung damage, alcohol causes liver damage. A healthy diet and physical activity significantly lowers alcohol-related liver mortality.² People who smoke a pack of cigarettes or more a day, vape, use drugs, eat unhealthy diets, *and* drink alcohol are far more likely to acquire liver damage than someone who regularly exercises, eats healthy, and drinks alcohol in moderation. The fact remains, as study after study has shown, that non-smoking alcohol drinkers, even heavy drinkers, on average, outlive non-drinkers.³

ALCOHOL IS SCRIPTURALLY PERMISSIBLE – SMOKING AND VAPING ARE NOT

DEUTERONOMY 14:26 (NKJV):

And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink,* for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before YHWH (the Lord) your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household.

***strong drink (KJV).**

PROVERBS 31:6 (NKJV):

Give strong drink to him who is perishing,* and wine to those who are bitter of heart. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.

***bitterly distressed (TLV)**

ECCLESIASTES 9:7 & 10:19 (NKJV):

Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart; ...

A feast is made for laughter, and wine makes merry;

THERE IS NO SAFE WAY SAFELY TO SMOKE ANYTHING, EVEN IN MODERATION

CIGARETTE WARNINGS:

Smoking can cause a slow and painful death. Smoking causes head and neck cancer. Tobacco smoke can harm your children. Smoking during pregnancy stunts fetal growth. Smoking causes age-related macular degeneration, which can lead to blindness. Smoking causes bladder cancer, which can lead to bloody urine. Smoking reduces blood flow to the limbs, which can require amputation. Smoking causes cataracts, which can lead to blindness. Smoking causes COPD, a lung disease that can be fatal. Smoking can cause heart disease and strokes by clogging arteries.⁴

CIGAR WARNINGS:

Cigars are not a safe alternative to cigarettes. This product contains nicotine. Nicotine is an addictive chemical.⁵ Cigar smoking can cause cancers of the mouth and throat, even if you do not inhale. Cigars cause lung cancer even if you don't inhale. Cigar smoking can cause lung cancer and heart disease. Cigar use while pregnant can harm you and your baby. Smoking increases the risk of impotence. Smoking kills - quit now.

MARIJUANA WARNINGS:

Smoking marijuana may cause: cancer, birth defects, lung damage, or brain damage., nausea, neuropathy, PMS, seizures, stress, and many other ailments.

SMOKING MARIJANA VS EATING MARIJUANA

Many people have legitimate medicinal reasons for using marijuana and/or THC products, the primary psychoactive compound in cannabis (marijuana) that produces the "high" sensation, that range from ADD/ADHD, anorexia, anxiety, arthritis, cancer, Crone's disease, chronic pain, depression, epilepsy, fibromyalgia, glaucoma, HIV/AIDS, insomnia, migraines, muscle spasms, nausea, neuropathy, PMS, seizures, stress, and many other ailments. It is strongly advised to consume THC gummies rather than smoking marijuana, as consuming gummies avoids the respiratory damage caused by smoking. Choose gummies that are made from pectin, a clean plant based product, and not gelatin, which are often derived from pork, which is unclean.

VAPE & E-CIGARETTE WARNINGS:

Vaping poses serious health risks including EVALI (e-cigarette or vaping-associated lung injury), which causes severe lung damage, respiratory distress, and death. Vapes contain addictive nicotine and harmful chemicals like formaldehyde, acrolein, and heavy metals (nickel, lead), which can cause addiction, brain development issues, and cancer.⁶

VITAMIN VAPES

Vitamin vapes, often marketed as "nutritional supplement diffusers," are not considered safe and have not been approved by the FDA for health benefits. Inhaling vitamins is ineffective, as vitamins are designed for ingestion, and heating them can create harmful volatile organic compounds (VOCs) that cause lung injury and inflammation.⁷ All forms of smoking causes smoker's cough, pulmonary embolisms, popcorn lung, lung cancer, and a myriad of other health problems.

CHEWING TABACCO WARNINGS:

This product can cause oral and mouth cancers. This product can cause gum disease and tooth loss. This product is not a safe alternative to cigarettes. Smokeless tobacco is addictive.

SMOKING AND DRINKING: MORE TOXIC TOGETHER THAN JUST SMOKING ALONE

Combining smoking and drinking poses severe health risks, as they synergistically increase the likelihood of developing cancers of the mouth, throat, and esophagus. Drinking alcohol in moderation, without smoking, lowers the risk of many cancers. Alcohol enhances nicotine cravings, while the combination accelerates physical aging, damages internal organs, and creates a highly addictive, dangerous pattern that raises cancer risk significantly more than smoking or vaping alone.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20 (NKJV):

Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Our bodies ultimately belong to God and no one has the right to defile the lungs of their body with toxic, unhealthy, smoking and vaping products, which deteriorate health and lead to premature death. A true believer's body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, not a chamber of toxic fumes and deadly chemicals.

REGENERATION OF LUNG TISSUE

Lung tissue begins repairing itself almost immediately after quitting smoking, with significant regeneration of cilia (cleaning hairs) occurring within 1–12 months, reducing cough and infection risk. The lungs can heal significantly, with lung function increasing and cancer risk greatly decreasing after every year.

SAUNAS AND STEAM ROOMS: HEALTHY THERAPIES FOR LUNGS

Saunas generally support lung health by loosening mucus, reducing inflammation, and potentially improving lung function in people with asthma or COPD. Regular use (2–7 times weekly) is associated with a lower risk of colds, pneumonia, and other respiratory illnesses. Steam rooms provide temporary relief for lung congestion by using moist heat to soothe airways, ease breathing, loosen mucus, and cleanse lungs.

BREAKING GENERATIONAL CURSES (VICES)

Children with one or two smoking parents are roughly four times more likely to start smoking, with rates increasing from 13% when neither parent smokes to 38% when a parent is a smoker. Smoking rates rise significantly with exposure to parental, sibling, or household smoking, influencing up to 75% of adolescent behavior in some studies.

REPLACE BAD, UNHEALTHY HABITS WITH GOOD, HEALTHY ONES

While parental, sibling, and peer influence is a major factor which may have influenced a person to start and continue smoking, quitting this generational vice is not impossible, for with God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26; Mark 10:27).

SMOKING AND VAPING: UNCLEAN

It may seem absurd in declaring the obvious: SMOKING AND VAPING: UNCLEAN, but there are some believers in the world who follow God's Dietary Commandments, according to Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, yet smoke and/or vape. There will be no smoking or vaping in the kingdom of God.

If you don't take care of your health, your health will not take care of you. And if your health does not take care of you, your health will fail you. Smoking and vaping is every bit as an unclean practice as consuming pork, shellfish, and all other unclean creatures.

¹ Rabbinical Council of America, “RCA’s Vaad Halacha Bans Use of Tobacco Products.” June 3, 2006.
<https://rabbis.org/rcas-vaad-halacha-bans-use-of-tobacco-products/>

² EASL The Home of Hepatology, “Study Reveals Beneficial Effects of Diet and Exercise on Alcohol-Related Adverse Liver Health,” 27 Aug, 2025. <https://easl.eu/news/diet-and-exercise-on-alcohol-related-liver-health/>

³ TIME – HEALTH, Cloud, John, “Why Do Heavy Drinkers Outlive Nondrinkers?” Aug. 31, 2010.
<https://time.com/archive/6597597/why-do-heavy-drinkers-outlive-nondrinkers/>

⁴ FDA U.S. FOOD & DRUG ADMINISTRATION, “Cigar Labeling and Health Warning Requirements,” 09/08/2025.
<https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/labeling-and-warning-statements-tobacco-products/cigarette-labeling-and-health-warning-requirements>

⁵ FDA U.S. FOOD & DRUG ADMINISTRATION, “Cigarette Labeling and Warning Statement Requirements,” 10/06/2020.
<https://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products/labeling-and-warning-statements-tobacco-products/cigar-labeling-and-warning-statement-requirements#:~:text=WARNING%3A%20Cigar%20smoking%20can%20cause,heart%20disease%2C%20even%20in%20nonsmokers.>

⁶ CDC, “Smoking and Tobacco Use,” JANUARY 31, 2025.
<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/e-cigarettes/health-effects.html>

⁷ FDA U.S. FOOD & DRUG ADMINISTRATION, “WARNING LETTER Vitamin Vape, Inc.” — December 01, 2021.
<https://www.fda.gov/inspections-compliance-enforcement-and-criminal-investigations/warning-letters/vitamin-vape-inc-617787-12012021>