

Why Are Muslims Prohibited from Consumption of Alcohol?

This short article was written with some appreciative and gainful assistance from the Fiji Ministry of Health (NCHP¹), insofar as different types of sicknesses and defects impact on the human body from common practice of alcoholism. Special thanks to the Fiji Ministry of Health (NCHP) for matters on clinical facts.

Whilst much of the sicknesses and defects relating to alcoholism have been discovered, analysed and documented over the last 50 years, the fact remains undisputedly, that the Holy Qur'an prohibited the consumption of alcohol more than 1,500 years ago, with very clear words structure in several Chapters and which cannot be misinterpreted. Any misinterpretation has to be wilfully inspired. The Holy Qur'an is both intrinsically and perpetually proactive in warning humanity through the conduit of Islam, within its scripture texts and also proclaiming the world's final prophet, Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as the world's most perfect exemplar.

Humans are the very best and the pride of all creations by Allah; and Allah does not want His very best of creation to be wasted away with ruthless living and alcohol-driven particular lifestyles, which will harm people more than any good to them. The harm is of greater percentage and the good is lesser. This is stated as an ordinance in the Holy Qur'an at 2:219, as *"They ask thee about intoxicants and games of chance. Say: In both of them is a great sin and (some) advantage for men, and their sin is greater than their advantage. And they ask thee as to what they should spend. Say: What you can spare. Thus does Allah make clear to you the messages that you may ponder."* The expression "men" denotes mankind in totality. This Divine order to mankind also concludes that money should not be spent and wasted on prohibited items such as alcohol.

Consider the analogy of a drunken person conversing with the most senior person of any country. It would be a most disgusting event for any person to appear before and start to converse with the Head of State of any country whilst under the influence of alcohol; as obviously that person, in drunken stupor, would be very much out of self-control. Alcohol has such overpowering effects on common humans that the Holy Qur'an makes very precise ordinance for people, whilst under the influence of alcohol, to refrain from worshipping. This is precisely stated in the opening clause of the Holy Qur'an at 4:43, as *"O you who believe, go not near prayer when you are intoxicated till you know what you say..."* Prayer is both spiritual nourishment to the soul and direct communications with Allah, the Supreme Creator. It must be noted that a "person" constitutes a body and a soul and whilst material food is essential material nourishment for the material human body, prayer is essential spiritual nourishment for the human soul, which is a spirit.

Once a person is under the influence of alcohol, then accordingly that person has made opportunities very easy for the devil to take advantage in majority control over that person's mind and self-respect; and this is given very exactly in the Holy Qur'an at 5:90-91, as *"90 O you who believe, intoxicants and games of chance and (sacrificing to) stones set up and (dividing by) arrows are only an uncleanness, the devil's work; so shun it that you may succeed."*

¹ NCHP = National Centre for Health Promotion (Ministry of Health, Fiji)

“91 The devil desires only to create enmity and hatred among you by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you back from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. Will you then keep back?”

The Holy Qur’an clarifies most impressively that whilst there are some recognised good properties in certain types of food and fruit, indiscriminate humans have taken upon themselves to convert those fruits and juices into intoxicants, with consequential senseless behaviours; and this has been clarified at 16:67, as *“And of the fruits of the palms and the grapes, you obtain from them intoxicants and goodly provision. There is surely a sign in this for a people who ponder.”*

The complexity of the human body is still not fully understood by humans and new scientific discoveries continue on regular basis. The human body is never-endingly marvellous both in design and function. Praise Allah!

Allah is the Beneficent. As the Beneficent, Allah has provided all humans of whatsoever ethnicity and religious classifications, and in whatsoever country, without the humans’ asking, all the basic environmental and survival needs, everything that humans need day and night since time immemorial. Allah will continuously do so forever into the future and little do humans say thanks to Him. Yet humans have been seen to harm and to eventually destroy those marvellous bodies Allah has given them, by practising alcoholism.

So far, this article has analysed and elevated Allah as the Beneficent and Who has provided humanity with various benefits at His unequalled discretionary pleasure. That is one side of the equation. It is necessary to analyse the other side of the same equation, which shows the negativity or long-term side effects of alcoholism. This comprehensive list of 10 mainstream effects of alcoholism on the human body is given below in the matrix.

No	Area of Human Body	Medically Recorded Common Side Effects
1.	Central Nervous System	<i>(a) Impaired senses of vision, hearing, dulled smell of taste, decreased pain perception</i>
		<i>(b) Altered sense of time and space</i>
		<i>(c) Impaired motor skills, slow reactions</i>
		<i>(d) Impaired judgement, confusions</i>
		<i>(e) Hallucinations</i>
		<i>(f) Fits, blackouts</i>
		<i>(g) Tingling and loss of sensation, in hands and feet</i>
		<i>(h) Early onset dementia (alcohol related brain damage)</i>
		<i>(i) Wernicke-Korsakoff Syndrome and psychosis (delirium)</i>
		<i>(j) Mood and personality changes</i>
2.	Circulatory System	<i>(a) High blood pressure</i>
		<i>(b) Irregular heart beats</i>
		<i>(c) Damage to heart muscles</i>
		<i>(d) Increased risk of heart attack and stroke</i>
3.	Liver	<i>(a) Swollen, painful and inflamed liver</i>
		<i>(b) Cirrhosis of liver</i>

		<i>(c) Cancer of liver</i>
		<i>(d) Fluid build-up oedema</i>
		<i>(e) Increased risk of haemorrhage</i>
		<i>(f) Liver failure, coma and death</i>
4.	General Human Body	<i>(a) Weight gain</i>
		<i>(b) Headaches (hangovers)</i>
		<i>(c) Muscle weakness</i>
5.	Gastrointestinal System	<i>(a) Stomach lining inflamed and irritated</i>
		<i>(b) Ulcers of the stomach or duodenum</i>
		<i>(c) Inflammation or varicose veins of the oesophagus</i>
6.	Pancreas	<i>Painful, inflamed and bleeding</i>
7.	Intestines	<i>(a) Inflammation and ulcers</i>
		<i>(b) Irritation of the lining</i>
		<i>(c) Cancer of the intestines and colon</i>
8.	Immune System	<i>(a) Depresses immune responses</i>
		<i>(b) Infections increase</i>
9.	Reproductive System (male and female)	<i>(a) Reduced fertility</i>
		<i>(b) Impaired sexual performance</i>
		<i>(c) Impotence</i>
		<i>(d) Decreases sperm count and movement</i>
		<i>(e) Increased risk of breast cancer (in females)</i>
		<i>(f) Early onset of menopause</i>
		<i>(g) Irregular menstrual cycle</i>
10.	Pregnancy and babies	<i>(a) Foetal alcohol syndrome</i>
		<i>(b) Foetal alcohol effects</i>
		<i>(c) Small head, possible brain damage, retarded growth and development</i>

It becomes conclusively noticeable that alcoholism is not limited to males only but includes females.

There were over 124,000 prophets as Ambassadors of Allah since creation; and there is not a nation in which Allah has not sent His prophet (in some countries several prophets over centuries) as His Ambassador and servant to carry out His work at the basic common person community level.

Allah in His immaculate wisdom sent His prophets as normal-appearance persons, to live and mingle with the various communities in delivery of His messages and to demonstrate as His practising exemplars to those peoples. Previous prophets came to serve only their communities in the main. Some of the early prophets were also Rulers and Kings of their communities.

As time progressed since creation, the messages delivered to communities were modified for betterment in progressive alignments to changing civilisations and cultures. In view of this sequence of changes, there had to be a final prophet, who would bring about conclusive and cumulative sets of messages to the whole world and not just to a limited community. Accordingly, a scripture had to be introduced as supportive permanent reference work into the indefinite future, to support the final sets of messages. The final prophet was Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the final sets of messages are compiled in the wonderful scripture, and the final scripture, the Holy Qur'an.

This aspect of finality is very clear in the Holy Qur'an at 33:40, as *"Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the prophets. And Allah is ever Knower of all things."*

The title "Seal" of the prophets means that Allah has proclaimed with certainty that all 124,000 prophets, commencing from Prophet Adam (a.s) through and including all prophets in between and finally including Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), will never return to earth in their human material form.

The Holy Qur'an is also the Divine Ordinance, the best sets of religious laws, drafted by Allah through revelations delivered to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). He was the only prophet in history, who was receiving Divine revelations and relaying them to his dedicated followers.

The Holy Qur'an proudly holds its own authenticated Divine certification to carry out this process of relaying Divine messages to humanity; and this is given in the Holy Qur'an at 5:67, as *"O Messenger, deliver that which has been revealed to thee from thy Lord; and if thou do (it) not, thou hast not delivered His message. And Allah will protect thee from men. Surely Allah guides not the disbelieving people."*

Islam warns peoples of all walks of life in all communities against wrong beliefs and practices; and if people decide to ignore the Beneficial advice given to them, then their final outcome is their own making and regret shall be too late.

There is no other scripture in the world which has its testimony as authored by Allah, but the Holy Qur'an. Its testimony is incomparable to all other scriptures and this has been made clear at 6:19, as *"Say: What thing is the weightiest in testimony? Say: Allah is witness between you and me. And this Quran has been revealed to me that with it I may warn you and whomsoever it reaches. Do you really bear witness that there are other gods with Allah? Say: I bear not witness. Say: He is only One God, and surely I am innocent of that which you set up (with Him)."*

Hence the Holy Qur'an has sanctioned that correct advice shall be given to those who need to be guided. This is given in the Holy Qur'an at 3:103, as *"And from among you there should be a party who invite to good and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong. And these are they who are successful."*

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