

**“UNDERSTANDING ISLAM”** with Imam Shamshad on KCAA -- **SHOW #22** (02-02-2010)

SHOW: #22 TITLE: *“You Booze, You Lose -- Why Islam Forbids Alcohol.”*

AIR TIME: between 9:20am and 9:30am DATE: Tuesday, February 2nd, 2010

**PAUL:** It’s time once again for “Understanding Islam” with Imam Shamshad from the Chino Mosque. . . Welcome back and As-Salaam Alaikum, Imam Shamshad.

**IMAM:** Wa alaikum salaam, Paul. May peace and blessings be upon you and upon all of our listeners.

**PAUL:** Today’s episode of “Understanding Islam” is entitled: “You Booze, You Lose – Why Islam Forbids Alcohol.”

**IMAM:** Most people know Islam doesn’t allow drinking alcohol, but the common sense of this only hits home with non-Muslims after a drunk driver kills someone, like what happened this past week when we had that terrible tragedy where a drunk driver crashed his car and killed two young women riding with him.

**PAUL:** Ironically, he survived and now faces double murder charges. . . So today, we’re going to talk about the statistics and costs of alcohol abuse in America.

**IMAM:** But you know, Paul, Islam forbids drinking alcohol or using intoxicants or illegal drugs because, on a personal level, they not only impair the senses but they degrade or even destroy you spiritually. Intoxicants like alcohol keep you from doing your prayers effectively, and they disrupt your focus on, and remembrance of, God.

**PAUL:** And most people are aware of the terrible cost in lives and social resources because of drug and alcohol abuse.

**IMAM:** And while drug use is a big problem, by far the greater problem in scope and devastation is caused by alcohol.

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PAUL: That’s because it’s legal and its use is wide-spread.

IMAM: Yes. This is why stopping the evil effects of alcohol is impossible in societies that do not forbid its use.

PAUL: Another reason getting rid of alcohol always meets with resistance is not just because a lot of people like to drink, but because **SELLING** alcohol is **VERY** profitable. The profit margin is something like 70% on each drink.

IMAM: Then there is the police, the courts, the re-hab centers, the prisons -- all these institutions and facilities stay in business in large part because of alcohol-related crimes.

So today I am going to relate some statistics on alcohol abuse and its costs, and talk about why I believe Islam is the only way to solve this problem once and for all.

Islam never just forbids something that’s bad for you, it clearly explains **WHY** it is bad for you. To illustrate this, I will read from the Holy Quran, Chapter 2, verse 220:

[2:220] They ask thee concerning wine and the game of chance. Say: ‘In both there is great sin and also *some* advantages for men; but their sin is greater than their advantage.’ . . . And from Chapter 5, verses 91 and 92:

[5:91] O ye who believe! wine and the game of chance and idols and divining arrows are only an abomination of Satan’s handiwork. So shun *each one of* them that you may prosper.

[5:92] Satan desires only to create enmity and hatred among you by means of wine and the game of chance, and to keep you back from the remembrance of Allah and from Prayer. . .

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**PAUL:** Now, the verse mentions “wine”. . . but I’m guessing that beer and hard alcohol are also included as well?

**IMAM:** Yes. The word in Arabic that is being translated as wine means that which covers up your senses or impairs you, so it applies to any intoxicant that clouds your mind and interferes with your ability to function and think clearly.

**PAUL:** Well, everyone generally knows what happens when you drink. So when enough people in a society drink alcohol, and when enough of them abuse it, you begin to see all the problems we suffer from in this and other countries that encourage drinking -- alcohol-induced illness, accidents, assaults, crimes, incest, rapes and murders.

**IMAM:** And all that the makers and sellers of alcohol can say is: “Please don’t drink and drive”. . . but all the people who drink in bars and restaurants usually DRIVE there in a car, so asking them to NOT drive after they have already driven somewhere to drink is just idiotic. . .

**PAUL:** And asking them to bring someone along who DOESN’T drink so that person can give you a ride home hardly ever works, either, because people who don’t drink usually don’t like being around people who do. And, honestly? The only people who think drunks are cute or funny or entertaining or wise are the drunks themselves.

**IMAM:** And you know, Paul, the other thing they often say in ads for alcohol is: “Please drink responsibly”. . . Now, think about this. . . Does anyone EVER become MORE responsible the more they drink?

**PAUL:** No. The MORE people drink, the LESS “in control” they become physically, socially and morally. Why do you think guys buy alcohol for their dates when they go out?

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**IMAM:** Paul, honestly I can say I don't know anything about that. Thank God. Now I want to relate to our listeners some facts I found on-line. You can find these easily.

More than 100,000 U.S. deaths are caused by excessive alcohol consumption each year. Direct and indirect causes of death include drunk-driving, cirrhosis of the liver, falls, cancer, and stroke. Each year, 17,000 people are killed in accidents directly caused by drunk drivers.

This means that 39% of all traffic fatalities are caused by drunks: that's one alcohol-related death every half-hour.

A study in 2005 showed that alcohol dependence and alcohol abuse cost the United States \$220 billion. This amount was more than the cost associated with obesity (\$133 billion) or with cancer (\$196 billion).

Alcohol is typically found in the offender, victim or both in about half of all homicides and serious assaults, as well as in a high percentage of sex-related crimes, robberies, and incidents of domestic violence.

In 1997 study, roughly 75-percent of all prisoners were involved in alcohol or drug abuse in the time leading up to the offense for which they were convicted and jailed. And these are just the ones they caught and convicted!

53% of all adults in the U.S. say that one or more of their close relatives has a drinking problem.

About 18-million Americans have an alcohol abuse problem but only 3-million seek and receive treatment.

68-percent of all people who go to a trauma center have an alcohol or drug problem, and 50-percent of all police work is spent addressing alcohol-related problems.

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**IMAM:** Every year, 1,400 American college students between the ages of 18 and 24 die from alcohol-related accidents and injuries, including automobile accidents.

Every day in the U.S. more than 13,000 children and teens take their first drink, and if they keep drinking, 40% of them will become alcoholics. But here’s a fact that parents need to know: Your kids DO listen to you.

Almost 75% of all children between the ages of 8-17 cite their parents as the primary influence in their decisions about whether they drink alcohol or not. So parents need to tell their children not to drink.

**PAUL:** That’s at least one statistic we can say is a good one. . . Unfortunately, we’re out of time, but as always it’s been another enlightening and thought-provoking episode of “Understanding Islam” with Imam Shamshad. Give our listeners the contact number and websites if they have any questions or if they want to learn more about Islam.

**IMAM:** Of course, Paul. Our toll-free number is 1-800-WHY-ISLAM. . . That’s 1-800-WHY-ISLAM. . . and our main website is: [www.alislam.org](http://www.alislam.org). We also urge everyone to donate to the Haiti Relief efforts being conducted by Humanity First, where 92-cents of every dollar goes directly to helping people on the ground. Their website is: [usa.HumanFirst.org](http://usa.HumanFirst.org). And their toll-free number is: 1-877-99-HFUSA. . . That’s 1-877-99-HFUSA.

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