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On Gambling

Gambling is, perhaps, the most wide-spread evil of our times. It has countless forms and names. Chess, cards, bridge, pool, sweepstake, raffle, lottery, roulette and various other plays are just plain gambling – by whatever civilized name they may be called. And these are the standard entertainment of our times.

Gambling, however mild, has been forbidden in Islam. Some people play such games to 'kill time'. They fail to understand that the 'life' given to them is just a span of 'time' – so many hours or days or years. 'To kill time' means, in more clear language, 'to kill life' and life was not given us to be destroyed.

Others indulge in such activities in expectation of some monetary gain. It is true that the urge to get something for nothing is very old; but Islam does not encourage it. After all, forgery, robbery and fraud also are the manifestations of the same urge; but nobody ever thought of legalizing such practices on the plea that they are the result of a 'natural urge'. So why tolerate gambling?

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