120806 - Is Playing Poker Prohibited in Islam?

the question

Is it permissible to play poker on the internet? Please note that it is just playing for points and not for real money.

Summary of answer

If Poker is played for money, then it is gambling which is prohibited. If Poker is not played for money, it is still prohibited according to a number of scholars, because it is akin to dice in its dependence on conjecture and guesswork, and playing with dice is prohibited.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

What is Poker?

Poker is a common card game.

It says in Al-Mawsu`ah Al-`Arabiyyah Al-`Alamiyyah:

“A card game is a game of chance or skill. It uses rectangular pieces of cardboard, on each of which are shapes and numbers. It is possible to play hundreds of games using playing cards. Different numbers of people may take part in card games. The game of patience may be played by just one person; casino is played by two; pinochle or whist are played by four. Canasta needs between two and six players. In the case of poker, it may be played by as many as ten persons. There are other games that are also preferred by players, such as rummy, poker, black jack, five hundred, pick it, and so on. Each game has its own system and rules.”

Is playing poker without money prohibited?

If Poker is played for money, then it is gambling which is prohibited , because it is not permissible to offer money except in contests that were mentioned by the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) when he said: “There should be no (money) prizes except for contests in archery, camel-racing or horse -racing.” (Narrated by At-Tirmidhi, 1700, An-Nasa’i, 3585, Abu Dawud, 2574 and Ibn Majah, 2878. Classed as authentic by Al-Albani in Sahih Abu Dawud)

Some scholars added to that anything that may help in Jihad, whether tangibly or intangibly, such as competitions in memorizing the Glorious Quran or Sunnah of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and competitions in planes, ships, boats and so on. As for playing cards , that does not come under this heading.

If Poker is not played for money, it is still prohibited according to a number of scholars, because it is akin to dice in its dependence on conjecture and guesswork , and playing with dice is prohibited, because of the report narrated by Muslim (2260) from Buryadah ibn Al-Husayn (may Allah be pleased with him), according to which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever plays with dice, it is as if he were dipping his hand in the flesh and blood of a pig.”

Abu Dawud (4938) and Ibn Majah (3762) narrated from Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever plays with dice has disobeyed Allah and His Messenger.” (Classed as sound by Al-Albani in Authentic Abu Dawud)

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Sharh Muslim:

“The scholars said: Nardasheer means nard (dice). Nard is a Persian word that has been Arabized. Sheer means sweet. This Hadith was quoted as evidence by Ash-Shafi`i and a number of scholars as evidence that playing with dice is prohibited. What is meant by “dipping his hand in the flesh and blood of a pig” is when he is eating it, so it is likening the prohibition on dice to the prohibition on flesh and blood of pigs. And Allah knows best.”

Ibn Hajar Al-Haytami (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Tuhfat Al-Muhtaj Sharh Al-Minhaj (10/215):

“It is prohibited to play with dice according to the correct view because of the report of Muslim: “Whoever plays with dice, it is as if he were dipping his hand in the flesh and blood of a pig.” And according to a report narrated by Abu Dawud, “[he] has disobeyed Allah and His Messenger.” Dice games are based on conjecture and guesswork that lead to a great deal of foolishness. Ar-Rafi`i said: The point here is that dice are an analogy for all other types of games that are similar.

Everything that is based on conjecture is prohibited. That includes Kanjafah, which are cards on which there are pictures.”

The Standing Committee has issued a fatwa (15/231) stating that it is prohibited to play cards, even if it is not for money. This was also stated in a fatwa by Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him). (See Qadaya Al-Lahw wal Tarfih by Madun Rashid, p. 186)

For more details, please refer to the following answers: 95409 , 181642 , and 14095 .

And Allah knows best.