237205 - Ruling on computer games in which the player has a number of hearts, and every time he gets a heart he comes back to life

the question

What is the ruling on computer games in which it is written that the player has, for example, three souls – in other words, if he loses, he can come back again; or it is said that he has five hearts, and so on?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Islam does not forbid leisure activities or having permissible fun in permissible ways.

The basic ruling concerning computer games is that they are permissible, so long as they do not prevent one from fulfilling religious duties, such as establishing prayer and honouring parents, and so long as they do not include anything haraam – and how many haraam things there are in them. That includes the following:

1. Games that depict wars between the good people of earth and the evil people of heaven, and what such ideas imply of accusations against Allah, may He be exalted, and not venerating Him, and casting aspersions upon the noble angels.
2. Games that are based on venerating the cross and other symbols of disbelief, and the idea that coming to it gives health and strength, and the like. The same applies to games that design cards for Christmas as in the Christian religion.
3. Games that show approval and veneration of magic, or glorify magicians and sorcerers.

And there are other prohibited matters, which we have discussed previously in question no. 2898.

With regard to games such as those mentioned in the question, in which the player has three

souls, or comes to a heart and it gives him life, meaning that he can carry on playing, according to the rules of the game, there is nothing wrong with that, because this comes under the heading of play and fun, and these things are not real, and none of the players believe they are real.

It is no more than giving the player another opportunity, but so that the game will be more like a reality, they call this second attempt a new soul or a new life!

The basic principle is that there is leniency regarding play in Islamic teaching, which is why Islam permits playing with dolls and the like for girls, even though they may include things that are contrary to reality, such as the winged horse that ‘Aa’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) used to play with.

Abu Dawood (4932) narrated that ‘Aa’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) came back from the campaign to Tabook or Khaybar and there was a curtain over her niche. The wind lifted the edge of the curtain and uncovered ‘Aa’ishah’s toy dolls. He said: “What is this, O ‘Aa’ishah?” She said: My dolls. He saw among them a horse with two wings made of cloth and he said: “What is this that I see in the midst of them?” She said: A horse. He said: “What is this that I see on it?” I said: Two wings. He said: “A horse with wings?” She said: Have you not heard that Sulaymaan had horses with wings? She said: And the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) smiled so broadly that I saw his eyeteeth.

This hadith was classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

But you must be very careful to make sure that these games do not contain religious symbols belonging to false religions, such as crosses, statues of Buddha and other symbols of disbelief and misguidance.

And Allah knows best.