370655 - What is the evidence that gambling is a major sin?

the question

Gambling is prohibited; that is mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah, but there is no report which says that it is included among the major sins or that it is to be regarded as one of the most abhorrent sins, like riba, zina, and so on. So why do people include it with real major sins? What is their evidence?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Gambling is counted among the major sins according to the scholars.

Adh-Dhahabi said: The twentieth major sin is gambling. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{O you who have believed, indeed, intoxicants, gambling, [sacrificing on] stone altars [to other than Allah], and divining arrows are but defilement from the work of Satan, so avoid it that you may be successful

Satan only wants to cause between you animosity and hatred through intoxicants and gambling and to avert you from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. So will you not desist?} [Al-Ma’idah 5:90-91].

What is meant is gambling by any means, whether it is dice, chess or anything else. It comes under the heading of consuming people’s wealth unlawfully, which Allah prohibited in the verse:

{And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly} [Al-Baqarah 2:188].

It is also included in the hadith in which the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him)

said: “Men who mishandle the wealth of Allah that He has granted to them, the Fire will be theirs on the Day of Resurrection.” In *Sahih al-Bukhari* it is narrated that the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever says to his companion, ‘Come, I will gamble with you,’ let him give charity, for the mere request dictates that one must offer expiation or give charity, so what do you think about actually doing the deed?”

End quote from *al-Kaba’ir*, p. 88.

Ibn Hajar al-Makki said in *az-Zawajir ‘an Iqtiraf al-Kaba’ir*, 2/328: The four hundred and forty-third major sin: gambling, whether it is gambling on its own or accompanied by a game that is disliked (makruh), such as chess, or prohibited (haram), such as dice.

He quoted the evidence that we have referred to above, then he said: Note: This is counted [that is, as a major sin] by the clear text of the first verse, and it is obvious. End quote.

Further evidence for that is found in every text which prohibits consuming people’s wealth unlawfully and warning against that, such as the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): “Every body that is nourished by what is unlawful, the fire is more befitting for it. Narrated by at-Tabarani from Abu Bakr; classed as authentic by al-Albani in *Sahih al-Jami`*, 4519.

At-Tirmidhi (614) narrated from Ka`b ibn `Ujrah that no flesh grows from what is unlawful but the fire is more befitting for it. Classed as authentic by al-Albani in *Sahih at-Tirmidhi*.

The major sin is that which leads to a hadd punishment, or is subject to a warning of Hell, a divine curse or divine wrath.

See: *al-Mawsu`ah al-Fiqhiyyah*, 27/18.

Gambling leads to many negative consequences, which we have discussed previously in the answer to question 4013.

And Allah knows best.