12583 - Ruling on watching game shows and on entering prize draws

the question

What is ruling concerning attending/watching game shows such as "Wheel of Fortune", etc.? Also, in general, is it permissible to enter oneself in a drawing for a prize, say a car?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

It is not appropriate for a Muslim to waste his time in things that will not benefit him, so how about spending time doing things that are sinful or haraam? The time that a person wastes in his day is part of his life, and he should use it in doing things that will bring him closer to his Lord and avoid wasting it in doing haraam or evil things.

The program which the questioner mentions is a foolish program which the Muslim should not watch, in which women appear improperly dressed and in which young men and women appear together as boyfriend-girlfriend couples and the like, and in which the contestant collects a large amount of money then loses it if the wheel lands on the word “Bankrupt”. How can the viewer denounce what he sees of nakedness and gambling?

Secondly:

There is nothing wrong with a Muslim buying a product and then entering a prize draw from that company, but that is subject to conditions:

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen (may Allaah have mercy on him) said:

Companies nowadays offer prizes to those who buy from them, and we say that there is nothing wrong with this, subject to two conditions:

The first condition:

The price of the item purchased should be its true price, i.e., the price should not be raised in order to cover the cost of the prize. If the price is raised in order to cover the cost of the prize, then this is gambling and is not permitted.

The second condition:

The person should not buy the item in order to try to win the prize. If he buys it only in order to try to win the prize, and he has no real use for the item, then this is a waste of money. We have heard that some people buy cartons of milk or yogurt which they do not need, but they buy it for a chance of winning the prize. So you find that they buy it and pour it out in the marketplace or on the way home. This is not permissible, because it is a waste of money, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) has forbidden wasting money.

As'ilah al-Baab al-Maftooh, no. 1162.

And Allaah knows best.