

وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَلِلدَّارِ الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ لِلَّذِينَ يُتَّقُونَ
 أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

What is the life of this world but play and amusement? But best is the home in the hereafter, for those who are righteous. Will ye not then understand? [Surah Al-An'am: 32]

أَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ مَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَلَهْوٌ وَزِينَةٌ وَتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ
 فِي الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ كَمَثَلِ غَيْثٍ أَعْجَبَ الْكُفَّارَ نَبَاهُهُ ثُمَّ يَهِيجُ
 فَتَرَاهُ مُمْصَفًا ثُمَّ يَكُونُ حُطَمًا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَغْفِرَةٌ
 مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانٌ وَمَا الْحَيَاةُ الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا مَتَاعُ الْغُرُورِ ﴿٢٠﴾

Know that the life of this world is but amusement and diversion and adornment and boasting to one another and competition in increase of wealth and children - like the example of a rain whose [resulting] plant growth pleases the tillers; then it dries and you see it turned yellow; then it becomes [scattered] debris. And in the Hereafter is severe punishment and forgiveness from Allah and approval. And what is the worldly life except the enjoyment of delusion. [Surah Al-Hadid: 20]

الغُرُورِ (vi) The word الغُرُورِ means anything useful or advantageous viz. utensils, furniture, or food, and the word الغُرُورِ means that by which one is deceived; something false and vain. In other words, the life of this world is a provision that is deceptive. It can be used to achieve the best end i.e. Allah's pleasure and an abode in Paradise in the Hereafter, but is very deceptive in and of itself.

Allah goes on after this, in the above verse, to elaborate the simile of this world's life: of it being like the vegetation or herbage that grows on earth, and pleases its tiller/farmer when it reaches its lustrous, colorful peak viz. the plants or crops become strong and fully

grown, bearing fruit or grain. However, after a short period of this lustre, color and vibrance, the plants eventually wither, become dry, lifeless straw, and die. The same earth that was alive with crops a while ago becomes empty and plain again; the color, leaves, fruit, grains or flowers are nowhere to be seen, as if they never existed!

That is, in reality, the same thing that happens to everyone and everything during the life of this world. The young, beautiful face becomes wrinkled and haggard; the lustrous hair becomes limp and grey; the strong bones become brittle, and strong muscles give way to weakness; the eyes lose their sight; the erect spine becomes bent. Moreover, every inanimate thing also goes into decline: the architecturally sound mansion becomes depleted and worn over the years, erosion causing its dilapidation and ruin; the clothes lose their newness, shine and glory, withering away; 'new' technology loses its value and becomes obsolete and unwanted; the flashy vehicle goes out of vogue and ends up in a junk yard as rubble. The list is endless

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(v) Contending, one with another, for superiority in number of (different types of) wealth and children.

“rat race” we are all inadvertently so familiar with, and to an extent, also involved in. This usually starts when a person enters their twenties and beyond, which is a time in their lives when they get married, start having children, and also start earning money through their careers.

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“The mutual rivalry for piling up (the good things of this world) diverts you (from the more serious things)”. [102:1]

Since □□□□□□□□□□ means contending to increase in numbers of tangible blessings, it is clear from this verse too, that human beings are naturally “diverted” in this life by this, from their primary goal - which should be success in the Hereafter.

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□□□□□□□□□□ (iv) Glorifying or boasting (viz. to each other), praising or commending own selves for certain properties or qualities, such as enumerating or recounting the particulars of their own ancestral nobility or eminence; or their honorable deeds. Contending for superiority by reason of honors arising from memorable deeds or qualities, or from

parentage or relationship, and other things relating to themselves or their ancestors; also: boasting of qualities extrinsic to themselves such as wealth, rank or station.

Display their honors, awards and plaques in their drawing rooms or offices, where they receive guests.

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(iii) Decoration, finery, show, pomp, or gaeity.

The word □□□□□□ means beauty and decoration; anything that is naturally pleasing to look at, or beautified to attract our attention. This could include everything that falls under the umbrella of natural beauty e.g. scenic landscapes, lush vegetation, flowers, and waterfalls, to those things that are made beautiful; which the human heart enjoys.

Bring to mind festivals, celebrations, jewelry, interior decor, architecture, branded/stylish couture, glamour, fashion, luxuries, accessories and diverse cuisines.

Theres no problem enjoying yourself and Allah(SWT) wants ease for us and not difficulty, although ultimately, happiness is not in material things, as we see evidence by those around us who are awash with things but not satisfied and not happy.

Theres a saying that doing what you like is freedom but liking what you do is happiness. From all the things we do, which leave us feeling satisfied rather than empty even if the moment seemed joyful? Look back through your life and ask which things really make you happy. Spending time with good people, listening to stories of great people, challenging ourselves through sports, talking, laughing with family etc.

□□□□□□ (ii) Diversion, pastime, sport, or play; especially that which is frivolous or vain; that which occupies a person so as to divert him or her from that which should render him sad or solicitous/anxious/concerned.

In the season of Hajj, we're all being called back to Allah(SWT) and its an opportunity for us to ask why we haven't received the invite if we haven't gone and, if we have, **whats currently distracting** us from Allah(SWT).

Abu Bakr al-Ismaa'eeli al-Haafiz narrated from the hadith of Abu 'Amr al-Awzaa'i: Ismaa'eel ibn 'Ubaydullah ibn Abi'l-Muhaajir told me: 'Abd ar-Rahmaan ibn Ghanm told me that he heard 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab say: Whoever is able to do Hajj but does not do Hajj, then it is all the same whether he dies as a Jew or a Christian. This is a saheeh isnaad going back to

'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him)

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(i) Play, sport, game, fun, joke, prank, or jest.

Life is a game

Games are fun to play. They cause us to get really **involved** in them, whether as participants, or as onlookers.

The aspect of **competition** - winning versus losing, or earning more points by achieving a target, enthuses the more keen ones among us to a state of physical and mental euphoria.

They cause us to become totally absorbed, almost **devoted**, to the gameplay to the complete distraction from all else.

This week, the BBC featured an article titled 'Fortnite made me a suicidal drug addict'. It explains how Carl Thompson, 17, attempted suicide after his obsession with video game Fortnite turned his life into a nightmare.

Fortnite has attracted 125 million players since its launch a year ago. The survival game, played online and on Xbox and Nintendo consoles, is for over-12s. It is predicted to make £15 billion next year.

Carl soon began missing college. He stopped playing sport and stole from his parents to pay for the game's latest weapons and upgrades.

He says: "I was exhausted doing all-nighters, so my mates said I should try playing with amphetamines (drugs). I've always been anti-drugs, but all I wanted to do was play the game more, and this seemed the only way.

He explained how "the more battles you win, the more you want to keep playing. "Each time you're killed you're automatically dropped back into the battle zone, so it's like being on an endless loop, and all you want is to move up the rankings for more rewards and better status. One morning I urinated in a bottle by my desk and drank from another bottle."

It all got too much one night in April. He says: "I just had to escape this existence, and the only way I knew how was to kill myself. I climbed out of my bedroom window and looked down, wanting to end it all. I was shaking and crying. Before I could jump I felt a hand grab my neck and arm and yank me back."

His father saved him at the last moment and both parents said they had no idea what was going on until this stage. Carl's parents called in counsellor Steve Pope, and the lad's life is slowly getting back on track.

Figures show more than 5,000 people tried to get help for gaming addictions over the past year, a 167% rise - with 30% of them children.

So how does gaming relate to our deen?

- An action directly leads to a reward or punishment, unlike i
- In this life, you have a number of chances and reminders - person who met angel of death and asked for notice and was reminded about his many notices (friends dying, white hair, illness). Like the game this life could be up at any time and then there's no 1-Up (extra life)
- You are in control, just like in a First Person Shooter (FPS) game (e.g. Call of duty) and it is all being recorded so you will see it in playback when you stand before Allah(SWT)
- Loot is available and although not tangible, you have all the cheat codes to access it from walking to the masjid to lowering your gaze and prayer power-ups. It's interesting that we're not motivated by these certain rewards but can chase virtual rewards and badges.
- Miles for Pokemon Go but can't get to the masjid for salaah
- Building virtual worlds in Minecraft but struggle to build a community centre or masjid
- Black Ops, Fortnite and Battlefield but can't battle our selves to wake up for fajr
- Constantly running in FIFA for hours but struggle to stand before Allah(SWT) in prayer for even 5 minutes
- Chatting constantly, even with people we don't know, while gaming but not knowing what to say when we raise our hands to Allah(SWT)
- There are trolls in life which trouble and disrupt us in the form of Shayateen and bad company
- We have mini shields like taqwa to protect us from evil and heals through reciting the Qur'an

Next time you take The "L" (loser), remember that a day will come when you will receive your rewards as well.