GHULAMHUSSEIN AND THE GAME OF CHANCE

Ghulamhusein was a popular social figure and a keen host of guests coming to him from distant lands. He lived in Moshi, a beautiful small town at the foot of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. He was generous and hospitable to one and all. One of his hobbies during leisure hours particularly on Saturdays and Sundays was to play the game of cards with his friends. For hours they used to get together where they enjoyed the game. It was not with the aim of gambling but rather just for pleasure and pass time. Once in the midst of a lively game of cards, his servant came to inform him that a guest of his was seriously ill at the guest house and needed his immediate attention. He sent the servant back saying he would come soon. But he was so much engrossed to withdraw from it. So he continued to play with keen interest. After a while, his servant came again to report that the condition of the guest was deteriorating and needed his urgent attention as there was no one else to attend. But Ghulamhusein was so deeply engrossed in the game that he did not want to be disturbed. As such, again he sent the servant back promising to come soon. By the time he could be free from the very mind captivating game of cards, the servant came for the third time. But this time he reported that the guest of his a poor traveler from distant lands had already died. This news gave a shock of his life to Ghulamhusein. It convinced him of the evil and harmful effect of such an indoor game. There and then he vowed never to indulge himself in such a game. Is this not an eye-opening example of an intoxicating and mentally distracting game of cards, commonly played today either as a pass-time or for gambling purposes? Perhaps it also explains the philosophy behind absolute Islamic forbiddance to play or watch such a game, even without the chance of gaining or losing money. It is meant to be prevention than a cure, lest man is one day tempted to use the game for gambling purpose.