



﴿ يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ قُلْ فِيهِمَا إِثْمٌ كَبِيرٌ وَمَنْتَفِعٌ لِلنَّاسِ  
وَإِثْمُهُمَا أَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَفْعِهِمَا وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا يُنْفِقُونَ قُلِ الْعَفْوَ كَذَلِكَ يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ  
لَكُمْ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَنْفَكُونَ ﴾ (سورة البقرة: ٢١٩)

2:219. They ask you about intoxicants and gambling. Say: In them is great sin, and some benefit for people; but the sin is greater than the benefit. They ask you how much they are to spend. Say: Whatever is surplus to your needs. Thus does Allah make clear to you His revelations, so that you may reflect –

That is, the believers ask you – O Messenger (ﷺ) – about the rulings on intoxicants and gambling. These were common practices during the jāhiliyah and when Islam first came. It was as if there was some uncertainty about them, hence they asked about the rulings on them. So Allah commanded His Prophet (ﷺ) to explain to them the benefits and harms that they entailed. This was a precursor to the prohibition on them, which was inevitable.

Allah tells us that the sin and harm that result from them, such as loss of reason and wealth, preventing people from remembering Allah and praying, and the enmity and hostility that they may create are greater than the benefits that people think come, from them, such as making money by dealing in intoxicants and what they gain from gambling, and the pleasures they get when indulging in them. This statement is aimed at deterring people from them, because the wise person will try to attain that which is clearly of benefit and will seek to avoid that which does more harm than good.

But because they were so used to them, it was difficult to make them give them up all at once. Hence this verse came as a precursor to the prohibition which is mentioned in the verse in which Allah (ﷻ) says: