

111951 - Is the testimony of a person who raises pigeons acceptable?

the question

Why is not the testimony of a person who grows pigeons accepted (like carrier pigeons and other types)? I heard that once and I want to make sure of the ruling on this.

Detailed answer

There is nothing wrong with raising pigeons for the purpose of pleasure, or to breed them for food or to sell them, or to use them for sending messages as they were used in the past.

As for flying them for fun and playing with them, this is something that is regarded as blameworthy in sharee'ah, because it harms people and may lead to the "pigeon fancier" stealing the pigeons of others, and it wastes time in something that is of no benefit. This is the person whose testimony the scholars said is not acceptable.

Al-Kasaani said:

With regard to the one who plays with pigeons, if he does not fly them then it does not mean that he is not of good character, but if he does fly them, that cancels out his good character, because it leads to him looking at women uncovered (in the courtyards of their houses, from the height to which he climbs in order to fly the pigeons) and it distracts him from prayer and other acts of worship. End quote.

Badaa'i' al-Sanaa'i (6/269).

Ibn Qudaamah said:

The one who plays with pigeons and flies them cannot give testimony. This is the view of ashaab al-ra'y (the Hanafis). Shurayh did not regard the testimony of one who keeps pigeons as acceptable, because it is foolishness and baseness and lack of chivalry; it involves annoying one's neighbours when he releases them and sees into their houses and throws stones at them. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) saw a man who was chasing a pigeon

and said: “A devil chasing a she-devil.” Narrated by Abu Dawood (4940); see also Saheeh al-Jaami’ (3724).

If he keeps pigeons in order to raise their chicks, send messages, or to enjoy them without that causing annoyance to others, then his testimony is not to be rejected.

Al-Mughni (10/172, 173).

Ibn al-Qayyim said:

The ruler should prevent those who play with pigeons above people’s heads, because that leads to them looking out over them and seeing into the private areas of their houses (‘awrah). End quote.

Al-Shawkaani said:

The words “a devil following a she-devil” indicate that it is makrooh to play with pigeons, and that it is a kind of entertainment that is not permissible. A number of scholars stated that it is makrooh, and it is not far-fetched to say that it is haraam – if the hadeeth is saheeh – because the fact that the one who does that is called a devil implies that, and the pigeon is described as a she-devil either because it is the cause of the man chasing it or because it does the actions of a she-devil in that it distracts men into following it and playing with it because of its beautiful appearance and sweet voice. End quote.

Nayl al-Awtaar (8/106).

And Allaah knows best.