

232288 - Explanation of the hadith “Goodness is tied to the forelocks of horses until the Day of Resurrection”

the question

In the hadith it says that goodness is tied to the forelocks of horses. What does this hadith mean? What is the reason for this hadith?

Detailed answer

Al-Bukhari (2852) and Muslim (1873) narrated from `Urwah ibn al-Ja`d (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Goodness is tied to the forelocks of horses until the Day of Resurrection: reward and booty.”

Al-Bukhari (2371) and Muslim (987) narrated that Abu Hurayrah said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Goodness is tied to the forelocks of horses until the Day of Resurrection. Horses are of three types: for one man they will bring reward, for another they will be a shield, and for another they will be a burden. As for those which bring reward, that is when a man keeps them for the sake of Allah and prepares them (for jihad); nothing disappears into their stomachs but Allah writes down reward for him. If he grazes them in a field, they do not eat anything but Allah writes down reward for him. If he gives them water to drink from a river, for every drop that disappears into their stomachs there is reward for him – until he mentioned the reward for their urine and dung. – If they run away over one or two hills, for every step they take, there is reward. As for those which are a shield for a man, he keeps them as a source of dignity and honour, but he does not forget their rights with regard to their backs and stomachs both at times of hardship and times of ease. As for those which are a burden for a man, he keeps them for reasons of pride and arrogance and to show off to people. That is the one for whom they are a burden.”

According to a report narrated by Muslim (1873), “Goodness is tied to the forelocks of horses.” It was said to him: O Messenger of Allah, how is that? He said: “Reward and booty until the Day of Resurrection.”

What the hadith means is that horses that are prepared for jihad in Allah's cause are accompanied by goodness, and that will remain with them until the Day of Resurrection. If he uses them in jihad, he will inevitably attain reward or booty, and perhaps both.

With regard to reward: every time the horse eats or drinks or walks, and even when it urinates, Allah will write down reward for its owner.

With regard to booty, that is attained by achieving victory over the enemy, and taking their wealth.

Regarding the word horses, al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

What is meant is horses that are used for military campaigns, and for fighting whilst riding them, or are kept for that purpose. (*Fat-h al-Bari*, 6/55).

Shaykh Ibn `Uthaymin (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

What is meant by "horses:" is horses for jihad, because this goodness is explained by the words "reward and booty," and this can only apply to horses for jihad, so there is goodness in the forelocks of horses for jihad until the Day of Resurrection. Or it may be that the hadith is general in meaning and applies to all horses, whether they are for jihad or not, because of the general meaning. (*Sharh Riyad as-Salihin*, 5/377).

See also: *Sharh az-Zarqani `ala al-Muwatta'*, 3/70.

Regarding the words "goodness is tied to their forelocks," al-Manawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

That is, it is connected to them and that will never change, because they help in jihad against the enemies of faith, and suppress the evil of the disbelievers, and nothing can take their place in fighting and battle manoeuvres. (*Fayd al-Qadeer*, 3/171).

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

This indicates that Islam and jihad will remain until the Day of Resurrection, and what is meant is shortly before the onset of the resurrection, namely when the gentle breeze comes from the direction of Yemen and takes the soul of every believing man and woman, as is proven in *as-Sahih*. (*Sharh an-Nawawi `ala Muslim*, 7/69).

We do not know of any particular reason for this hadith, except for the purpose of highlighting the virtue of horses and the virtue of keeping them for jihad in Allah's cause.

And Allah knows best.