

2896 - What Ruling on killing mice and rats, and a comment on the character Mickey Mouse

the question

What Ruling on killing mice and rats ?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allaah.

There is nothing wrong with killing mice and rats, because 'Abd-Allaah ibn 'Umar (may Allaah be pleased with them both) narrated that Hafsaah said: the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said:

“There are five animals for which there is no blame on the one who kills them: crows, kites (hawk-like birds), mice/rats, scorpions and mad dogs.”

Narrated by al-Bukhaari, 1828. (Translators' note: the Arabic word fa'rah may refer to rats or mice, so both are mentioned in the translation).

Al-Qaasim ibn Muhammad said: I heard 'Aa'ishah, the wife of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), say: I heard the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) say:

“There are four things which are faasiq (corrupt) and may be killed at all times, whether one is in a state of ihraam [for Hajj and 'Umrah] or not: kites, crows, mice/rats and mad dogs.”

Narrated by Muslim, 1198.

Mice and rats are harmful creatures, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him)

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explained:

Ibn 'Abbaas said: a mouse (or rat) came and started dragging the wick (of the lamp). It threw it in front of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), onto the mat on which he was sitting, and it burnt a hole the size of a dirham. He said, "When you go to sleep, extinguish your lamps, for the Shaytaan will tell creatures like this to do something like this so that you will be burned."

Narrated by Abu Dawood, 5427.

The mice or rats that may live in people's houses are among the harmful creatures or vermin (fuwaysiqah) which the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) commanded us to kill in all situations, whether we are in ihraam or not. The root of the word fuwaysiqah (fasaqa) means to deviate from the right way and to do harm; hence a sinner is described as "faasiq", and these animals are called fawaasiq, as a metaphor for their evil nature; or it was said that it is because it is not haraam to kill them, whether one is in ihraam or not, for they have no sanctity or protection in any circumstances. Al-Tahaawi narrated in Ahkaam al-Qur'aan with his isnaad from Yazeed ibn Abu Nu'aym that he [Yazeed] asked Abu Sa'eed al-Khudri why mice/rats were called fuwaysiqah. He said: the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) woke up one night and saw that a mouse/rat had taken the wick of the lamp to burn down the house of the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), so he got up and killed it, and said that it was permissible to kill them whether one is in ihraam or not. This was mentioned by al-'Allaamah al-Dumayri.

Al-Bukhaari and Muslim narrated in their Saheehs that Abu Moosa al-Ash'ari said: A house in Madeenah burned down with its people inside. When the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) heard about this, he said:

"This fire is an enemy to you, so when you go to sleep, extinguish it."

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Al-Bukhaari narrated that Jaabir ibn 'Abd-Allaah said: the Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said:

“Cover the vessels, for the mouse/rat may drag out the wick (of the lamp) and burn the occupants of the house.”

Something similar was narrated by Muslim, in which he says: “For the fuwaysiqah may start a fire and burn the house and its occupants.”

Al-Tabari said, explaining these ahaadeeth: if a person wants to spend the night in a house in which there is no one else, and in which there is a fire or a lamp, it is a duty on him to extinguish it before he sleeps... The hadeeth was narrated by al-Haakim; he said its isnaad is saheeh.

(From 'Awn al-Ma'bood Sharh Abi Dawood).

Now that we know Islam calls mice and rats fuwaysiqah (evil) and allows us to kill them even in Makkah, and that they are a means which the Shaytaan tried to use to burn down the house of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him), and we know that they are one of the main reasons of damaging food and spreading the plague, we find it very strange that the foolish people in the west seek to make their children like mice and rats by propagating the character of Mickey Mouse in games, comics and funfairs. Go figure!!

And Allaah knows best.