

69770 - Ruling on selling cats

the question

What is the ruling on buying and selling cats?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allaah.

The majority of scholars are of the view that it is permissible to sell cats, and some are of the view that it is haraam. The latter are of the Zaahiri madhhab and this view was also mentioned in a report from Imam Ahmad (may Allaah have mercy on him). Ibn al-Mundhir also narrated that from Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him).

The view that it is haraam to sell cats is the more correct view, because it is proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) forbade that, and there is nothing to suggest the contrary.

Muslim (1569) narrated that Abu'l-Zubayr said: I asked Jaabir about the price of dogs and cats. He said: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) told us not to do that (i.e., sell them).

Abu Dawood (3479) and al-Tirmidhi (1279) narrated that Jaabir ibn 'Abd-Allaah (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) forbade the price of dogs and cats. Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Abi Dawood.

Some scholars are of the view that these ahaadeeth are da'eef (weak), but their view is to be rejected.

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Al-Nawawi said in al-Majmoo' (9/269): As for what as al-Khattaabi and Ibn al-Mundhir said about the hadeeth being weak, this is a mistake on their part, because the hadeeth in Saheeh Muslim has a saheeh isnaad. End quote.

Al-Shawkaani said in Nayl al-Awtaar (6/227), refuting the majority who interpret the prohibition in the hadeeth as meaning that it is makrooh and that selling cats is not a noble attitude or sign of chivalry: It is obvious that this is understanding the prohibition in a way that is contrary to its true meaning for no reason. End quote.

Al-Bayhaqi said in al-Sunan (6/18), also refuting the majority: Some scholars have interpreted it as referring to cats that are wild and cannot be caught. Some claim that this applied at the beginning of Islam when cats were ruled to be naajis (impure), but when it was ruled that their leftover food and water are taahir (pure), it became permissible to sell them. But there is no clear evidence for either of these two views. End quote.

Ibn al-Qayyim stated that it is definitely haraam to sell them in Zaad al-Ma'aad (5/773) where he said: This was stated in a ruling (fatwa) by Abu Hurayrah (may Allaah be pleased with him) and it is the view of Tawoos, Mujaahid, Jaabir ibn Zayd and all the Zaahiri scholars, and it is one of the two views narrated from Ahmad. This is the correct view, because the ahaadeeth which state that are saheeh, and there is no evidence to the contrary, so this is the view that must be adopted. End quote.

Ibn al-Mundhir said: If it is proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) forbade selling them, then such sales are invalid, otherwise they are permissible. End quote from al-Majmoo', 9/269

And it has been proven that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) forbade it, as in the hadeeth quoted above from Saheeh Muslim.

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It says in Fataawa al-Lajnah al-Daa'imah, 13/37:

It is not permissible to sell cats, monkeys or dogs, or any other carnivores that have fangs, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) forbade that and discouraged it, and because it is a waste of money, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) forbade wasting money.

And Allaah knows best.