

Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh narrated that he heard God’s Messenger (peace be upon him) say when in Makkah during the Year of Victory:

- 1 God and His Messenger have forbidden the sale of wine,
- 2 carrion,
- 3 pork
- 4 and idols.
- 5 People said: ‘Messenger of God, the fat of carrion is used as a coating for boats, varnishing hide and people use it in their lanterns?’ The Prophet said: ‘No. It is forbidden’.
- 6 God’s Messenger then said: ‘May God curse the Jews. When God, Mighty and Exalted, forbade them the fat of carrion, they melted it and sold it, devouring its price’. ⁽¹⁾

1 Related by al-Bukhari, 2236; Muslim, 1581.

From the Qur’an

- ﴿Forbidden to you are carrion, blood, the flesh of swine; and that over which any name other than God’s has been invoked; and the animal that has been strangled, or beaten to death, or killed by a fall, or gored to death, or savaged by a beast of prey, except that which you may have slaughtered when it is still alive; and [forbidden to you are] animals that have been slaughtered on idolatrous altars. And [forbidden also] is the division [of meat] by raffling with arrows; for all this is sinful.﴾ (5: 3)
- ﴿Believers, intoxicants, games of chance, idolatrous practices and divining arrows are abominations devised by Satan. Therefore, turn away from them so that you may be successful. (90) Satan seeks only to stir up enmity and hatred among you by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to turn you away from the remembrance of God and from prayer. Will you not, then, desist?﴾ (5: 90-91)
- ﴿Say: In all that has been revealed to me, I do not find anything forbidden to eat, if one wishes to eat thereof, unless it be carrion, or blood poured forth, or the flesh of swine - for all that is unclean - or a sinful offering over which any name other than God’s has been invoked. But if one is driven by necessity, neither intending disobedience nor exceeding his bare need, then know that your Lord is much-forgiving, ever-merciful.﴾ (6: 145)
- ﴿He makes lawful to them the good things of life and forbids them all that is foul.﴾ (7: 157)

The Narrator

Abu ‘Abdullāh Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn Ḥarām al-Anṣārī belonged to the Salimah clan of the Anṣār. He attended the second pledge given by the Anṣār to the Prophet at Aqabah. He was a youth at the time, accompanying his father who was one of the twelve representatives. His father took part in the Battles of Badr and Uḥud. It is reported that Jābir took part in the Battle of Ṣiffīn alongside ‘Alī ibn Abi Ṭālib. He was the mufti of Madinah during his lifetime. He died in Year 78 AH, 698 CE. Thus, he was the last survivor of the Prophet’s companions who attended the second Aqabah pledge of the Anṣār.

Summary

In this hadith, the Prophet (peace be upon him) mentions several things that are forbidden to sell. He makes it clear that when God’s forbids the consumption of something, he also forbids its usage and its price, if sold. When he mentioned that carrion is forbidden, his companions asked him about its fat, which may be used in painting and lighting. He told them that this is also forbidden to use. He further mentioned that the Jews incurred God’s wrath for their trickery. When God forbade them the use of the fat of dead animals, they melted it down and sold it.



Message and Meaning



God and His Messenger (peace be upon him) have forbidden wine and all intoxicant drinks because they influence one's mind which is the recipient of God's address and the duties given to man. It encourages a person to disobey God and do what is wrong. God says: 'Believers, intoxicants, games of chance, idolatrous practices and divining arrows are abominations devised by Satan. Therefore, turn away from them so that you may be successful. (90) Satan seeks only to stir up enmity and hatred among you by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to turn you away from the remembrance of God and from prayer. Will you not, then, desist?' (5: 90-91)

Since wine is forbidden to drink, its price when sold is also forbidden. Anas said: 'With regard to wine, God's Messenger (peace be upon him) cursed ten types of people: its brewer and the one who requests its brewing; drinker; carrier and the one to whom it is carried; server; seller; the one who takes its price; buyer and the one for whom it is bought'.⁽¹⁾ Abu Ṭalḥah asked the Prophet about orphan children who inherited some wine. The Prophet told him: 'Spill it off'. Abu Ṭalḥah asked: 'May I make it vinegar?' The Prophet said: 'No'.⁽²⁾



The Prophet also prohibited the selling of animals that die naturally, because carrion is forbidden to eat or use, as God says: 'Forbidden to you is carrion'. (5: 3) The only exception is the use of the hide of animals that are, when alive, pure and permissible to eat, such as sheep, cows, etc. The hide of such animals is usable after it is tanned. Ibn 'Abbās narrated: 'A slave woman belonging to Maymūnah was given a lamb as a *ṣadaqah* [i.e. a charitable gift], but the lamb died. God's Messenger (peace be upon him) passed by and said: "Why do you not take its hide, tan it and make use of it?" They said: "It is carrion". He said: "It is only forbidden to eat"'.⁽³⁾

Another exception is the eating of fish and locusts which die naturally. The Prophet said: 'Two types of dead animals and two types of blood are made lawful to you: the dead ones are fish and locusts; and the two bloods are the liver and spleen'.⁽³⁾



It is also forbidden to sell pork, because God has forbidden eating it, and ruled that the pig is impure. He says: 'Say: In all that has been revealed to me, I do not find anything forbidden to eat, if one wishes to eat thereof, unless it be carrion, or blood poured forth, or the flesh of swine - for all that is unclean - or a sinful offering over which any name other than God's has been invoked. But if one is driven by necessity, neither intending disobedience nor exceeding his bare need, then know that your Lord is much-forgiving, ever-merciful'. (6: 145)

1 Related by al-Tirmidhī, 1295; Ibn Mājah, 3381.

2 Related by Abu Dāwūd, 3675.

3 Related by Ibn Mājah, 3314.

4

Similarly forbidden is the manufacture and sale of idols, whether they are meant for worship or not, because they are considered a means to associating partners with God, i.e. *shirk*. The start of *shirk* and such association in the human world began with the making of idols, although they were not initially made for worship. Moreover, the Prophet said: 'The Last Hour is not due until Daws's women's buttocks sway around Dhul-Khalaṣah'.⁽¹⁾ Dhul-Khalaṣah was an idol worshipped by the Daws tribe in pre-Islamic days.

5

When the Prophet mentioned the prohibition of the sale of carrion or its use, his companions asked him whether its fat may be used for purposes other than food. Could it be used as sealer for boats and hide, or used as lighting oil? The Prophet told them that even such usage is forbidden.

They asked him about such usage of dead animals' fat and selling it because they thought that they were like donkeys. The Prophet forbade eating their meat but they were permissible to sell, ride and be used in other ways. The Prophet (peace be upon him) explained that the case of carrion was different, because it is impure. Hence, it is forbidden to eat or benefit by. Therefore, its sale is forbidden.

6

The Prophet then curses the Jews for the tricks they employed to circumvent God's law. They were forbidden to eat, use or sell animal fat, as God says: 'To those who followed the Jewish faith did We forbid all animals that have claws; and We forbade them the fat of both oxen and sheep, except that which is in their backs and entrails and what is mixed with their bones'. (6: 146)



1 Related by al-Bukhari, 7116; Muslim, 2906.

Implementation

1

It is forbidden for a Muslim to sell wine and all types of intoxicating drinks, whether he sells it to a Muslim or to an unbeliever. Its price is forbidden for Muslims to take.

2

Islam attaches great importance to man's mind, as it requires people to think and contemplate on God's creation. Islam also requires people to seek knowledge and forbids them what influences the mind and negatively affects its function, such as alcoholic drinks.

3

The prohibition of selling dead animals includes an embalmed animal carcass, which it is forbidden to buy or sell.

4

Eating pork and all types of pig meat is forbidden. Likewise, it is forbidden to sell it, whether the buyer is a Muslim or an unbeliever, because such a transaction is a collaboration in sin.

5

It is forbidden to own or manufacture idols, as this is a major sin. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: 'Indeed, those who are the most severely punished on the Day of Judgement are the image makers'.⁽¹⁾

6

The hadith shows that it is necessary to guard against the preliminaries of *shirk*, which means the association of partners with God. During the Prophet's lifetime, a man pledged to sacrifice some camels at Buwānah, which is in the southern part of Makkah. He went to the Prophet and told him that he pledged to give this sacrifice at Buwānah. The Prophet asked: 'Was there a worshipped idol in pre-Islamic days in that area?' People answered in the negative. He asked again: 'Did people celebrate any feast there?' People said that there was not. The Prophet said to the man: 'Then fulfil your pledge. [I asked because] a pledge that involves an element of disobedience of God may not be fulfilled. The same applies to a pledge that the pledger does not have'.

7

The Prophet's companions were not too shy to ask about using dead animal fat in useful ways that do not relate to human consumption. They thought that such animals were merely forbidden to eat. Their question was neither unwarranted nor one of objection. They merely asked to learn. Hence, shyness should not prevent one from asking legitimate questions.

8

Using ways and means to circumvent God's legislation is not a characteristic of believers. God describes the believers in the following terms: 'The response of believers, whenever they are summoned to God and His Messenger in order that he may judge between them, is none other than, "We have heard, and we obey". It is they that shall be successful'. (24: 51) Such evasive characteristics belonged to those Jews who incurred God's wrath. We should beware of doing the same.

1 Related by al-Bukhari, 5950; Muslim, 2109.

9

The Prophet (peace be upon him) warned against emulating what the Jews did of using tricks to circumvent God's law. He said: 'Do not do what the Jews did, so as to legalize what God has forbidden by resorting to stupid tricks'.⁽¹⁾

10

Those who resorted to tricks in order to do what God has forbidden were severely punished. They profaned the Sabbath when fishing was forbidden. They placed their fishing nets in the sea on Friday and left them on the Sabbath, so as to collect them up on Sunday. God transformed them into apes. Anyone who thinks of using a trick to break God's law should beware of God's punishment.



1 Related by Ibn Baṭṭāh al-'Ukburī in *Ibtāl al-Ḥiyāl*, p. 47.

