124154 - Keeping Pets in Islam: Allowed?

the question

I am ten years old and I would like to keep a pet. Are there any guidelines concerning that? If there is anything, please draw our attention to it.

Summary of answer

Keeping pets in Islam is permissible but with certain conditions and guidelines which are detailed in the answer below.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

We are very happy to receive questions from our youth such as you, who love Allah and His Messenger and who are smart and intelligent. This question is important and useful and is asked in a brief and polite manner. We ask Allah to look after you and take care of you and to reward with good everyone who has contributed to your good upbringing.

Keeping pets in Islam: Allowed?

Keeping and raising pets is something that is permitted in Islam and there is nothing wrong with it.

Al-Bukhari (6203) and Muslim (2150) narrated that Anas (may Allaah be pleased with him) said: The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was the best of people in attitude. I had a brother who was called Abu ‘Umayr. He (the narrator) said: I think he said: He was a weanling. When the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came and saw him, he said: “Abu ‘Umayr, what happened to the nughair (nightingale)?” He used to play with it.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

“It indicates that it is permissible for children to play with birds, and it is permissible to spend money on permissible things that will entertain children, and it is permissible to keep birds in cages and the like, and to clip the wings of birds, because one or the other must have been done in the case of Abu ‘Umair’s bird, and whichever is the case, the other comes under the same ruling.” (Fath al-Bari, 10/584)

Conditions of keeping pets in Islam

With regard to the conditions and guidelines on keeping animals, these include the following:

1. The animal that is kept should not be a dog, because Islam has forbidden keeping dogs except guard dogs and hunting dogs. The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: “The angels do not enter a house in which there is a dog.” Narrated by al-Bukhari (3225) and Muslim (2106). Would the Muslim be happy for the angels of mercy not to accompany him in his house because of an animal he is keeping?

2. Not going so far with regard to this matter that it reaches the stage of blameworthy extravagance. We have seen some people who pay thousands and even millions competing to buy a certain animal or take care of it and provide services for it. Some of them even bequeath some of their wealth to them. In some countries, there are festivals and shows for all kinds of animals, on which huge amounts of money are spent. All of this is foolishness and lack of common sense.

3. The animal must be treated kindly. If a Muslim keeps an animal, he must provide it with proper food and drink, and not cause it any harm or injury by mistreating it or using it for target practice or making animals fight one another, or exposing it to heat or cold. It was narrated from Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “Whilst a man was walking on the road, he became very thirsty. He found a well so he went down into it and drank, then he came out. There he saw a dog that was panting and biting the ground out of thirst. The man said: this dog is feeling the same thirst that I felt. So he went back down into the well and filled his shoe with water, then he held it in his mouth until he climbed

back up, and he gave the water to the dog. Allah appreciated (his action) and forgave him." They said: O Messenger of Allah, will we have a reward with regard to these animals? He said: "In every living thing there is reward."

Look at how the believer will be rewarded for taking care of animals; rather he may even enter Paradise because of his kind treatment of a single animal, as happened to the man mentioned in this hadith. Allah, may He be glorified and exalted, loves those who do good.

And the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has told us of a woman who went to Hell because of her neglect of a cat which she detained and it died of hunger; she did not feed it or let it go and eat of the vermin of the earth.

For more, please see these answers: 3004 , 7004 , and 22373 ,

And Allah knows best.