286430 - Meaning of the hadith “he will not get anything of this world except that which has been decreed for him”

the question

What is the meaning of one phrase from this hadith from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): “Whoever is focused on the Hereafter, Allah will make him feel content with his lot and grant him peace of mind, and his provision and worldly gains will come to him regardless (of circumstances, obstacles or people). Whoever is focused only on this world, Allah will confound his affairs and make him fear poverty constantly, and he will not get anything of this world except that which has been decreed for him”? My question is: what is meant by the words “and he will not get anything of this world except that which has been decreed for him”? If the hereafter is his main concern, will more of this world be decreed for him, and will this increase be part of what Allah had decreed and foreordained for him? We hope that you can clarify what is meant by this sentence.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

This hadith was narrated by at-Tirmidhi (2465) from Anas ibn Maalik, who said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Whoever is focused on the Hereafter, Allah will make him feel content with his lot and grant him peace of mind, and his provision and worldly gains will come to him regardless (of circumstances, obstacles or people). Whoever is focused only on this world, Allah will make him fear poverty constantly and confound his affairs, and he will not get anything of this world except that which has been decreed for him.”

It was also narrated by Ibn Maajah (4105) from Zayd ibn Thaabit, who said: I heard the Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) say: “Whoever is focused only on this world, Allah will confound his affairs and make him fear poverty constantly, and he will not get anything

of this world except that which has been written for him. Whoever is focused on the Hereafter, Allah will grant him peace of mind and make him feel content with his lot, and his provision and worldly gains will come to him regardless (of circumstances, obstacles or people).” Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth as-Saheehah (2/634).

With regard to the words “he will not get anything of this world except that which has been decreed for him” – in the second report, “he will not get anything of this world except that which has been written for him” – what is meant is that caring too much and being too eager for worldly gains will not increase a person in benefit, because his provision has already been decreed and written, so nothing will come to him except that which has been decreed and written for him, no matter how much he exerts himself for the sake of worldly gain. So the wise person must be content with seeking worldly provision in ways that are prescribed in Islamic teachings, without being eager for more.

As-Sindi said in his commentary on Ibn Maajah:

“and his provision and worldly gains will come to him regardless (of circumstances, obstacles or people)” that is, in spite of circumstances and in spite of those who try to prevent it.

Conclusion: what has been decreed for a person of provision will inevitably come to him, but if he is one who seeks the hereafter, it will come to him without undue exertion, but whoever seeks worldly gain, it come to him with exertion and hardship. So the one who seeks the hereafter will have both gains in this world and the hereafter. The goal of accumulating wealth is to find ease and comfort in this world, when this is attained by the one who seeks the hereafter, whereas the one who seeks worldly gain will lose out in this world and the hereafter, because in this world he exerts himself greatly in pursuit of worldly gain, so what benefit is there for him in wealth if he fails to attain comfort and ease? End quote.

Al-Mubaarakfoori (may Allah have mercy on him) said: “he will not get anything of this world except that which has been decreed for him” means whether he likes it or not, so he will get nothing of what he was seeking of extra worldly gains, despite his efforts and those of his

companions.

End quote from Tuhfat al-Ahwadhi (7/140).

At-Teebi (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

The words “and his provision and worldly gains will come to him regardless (of circumstances, obstacles or people)” are a counterpart to the words “he will not get anything of this world except that which has been decreed for him.”

The meaning of the former [regarding the one whose aim is the hereafter] is that what has been decreed for him of worldly gains and provisions will come to him regardless (of circumstances, obstacles or people).

The meaning of the latter [regarding the one whose aim is worldly gain] is that what has been decreed for him of worldly gains will come to him regardless of whether he likes it or not.

End quote from Sharh Mishkaat al-Masaabeeh (11/3372).

This is clear from the hadith of Jaabir ibn ‘Abdillah, who said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “O people, fear Allah and be moderate in seeking a living, for no soul will die until it has received all its provision, even if it is slow in coming. So fear Allah and be moderate in seeking provision; take that which is permissible and leave that which is forbidden.” Narrated by Ibn Maajah (2144); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Silsilat al-Ahaadeeth as-Saheehah (6/209).

What is meant by “be moderate in seeking a living” is: seek provision in a gentle manner, and the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) explained what is meant by that, which is to take that which is permissible and leave that which is forbidden.

See: Fayd al-Qadeer (3/207).

And Allah knows best