
Ruling on eating slaughtered meat of People of the Book

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Question: What is the ruling on eating the slaughtered animals of the People of the Book?

Shaykh Abdul-Azeez ibn Baaz (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ):¹

It is Halaal (lawful) for Muslims to eat from them, according to Ijma` (consensus of scholars), unless it is known that they are not slaughtered according to Sharee'ah (Islamic law), such as by strangling and the like, because Allaah (Glorified be He) says: **[Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibaat [all kinds of Halaal (lawful) foods, which Allaah has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them.]**²

In his explanation of this Ayah (Qur'aanic verse), Al-Haafidh ibn Katheer (may Allaah be merciful to him) said: "When Allaah (Exalted be He) mentioned the evil things which He has rendered as Haraam (prohibited) for His believing Slaves and the good things which He has rendered as Halaal for them, He said: **[Made lawful to you this day are At-Tayyibaat [all kinds of Halaal (lawful) foods]]** Allaah then mentioned the ruling on eating the slaughtered animals of the People of the Book, namely, the Jews and the Christians, by saying: **[The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you]**. Ibn `Abbaas, Aboo Umamah, Mujaahid, Sa'eed ibn Jubayr, `Ikrimah, `Ata', Al-Hasan, Makhul, Ibrahim Al-Nakh`y, Al-Suddy, and Muqatil ibn Hayyan said: The food refers to their slaughtered animals; and the Muslim scholars have agreed that it is Haalal for Muslims to eat from their slaughtered animals.

This is because they believe in the prohibition of offering slaughtered animals to anyone other than Allaah and mention the Name of Allaah when slaughtering their animals even if they believe in things which Allaah is far above.

Also, it is authentically reported in the Saheeh (authentic) Book of Hadeeth (i.e. Al-Bukhaaree and/or Muslim) from `Abdullah ibn Mughaffal (may Allaah be pleased with him) that he said: **[I found a bag containing fat on the Day of Khaybar. I caught hold of it and said: I will**

¹ (رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ) (rahimahullaah) May Allaah have mercy on him

² (Soorah al-Ma'idah 5:5)

not give anything today from it to anybody. I, then, turned around and saw that the Prophet (peace be upon him) **was smiling** (at my words)]. Fuqaha' (Muslim jurists) took this incident as evidence on the permissibility of eating what one needs from the spoils before distributing them. This is the evident meaning of this Hadeeth. On the other hand, the Fuqaha' of Al-Hanafeeyah (the followers of Imaam Aboo Haneefah's School of Jurisprudence), Al-Shafi'iyyah and Al-Hanabilah took it as evidence to refute the opinion of the followers of the Madh-hab (School of Jurisprudence) of Maalik who consider it impermissible for Muslims to eat the fats and other parts of the slaughtered animals of the Jews which have been rendered unlawful for them to eat. In short, the Malikiyyah consider it impermissible for Muslims to eat fats because Allaah (Exalted be He) says: **[The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you]** and this is not from their food. However, the Jumhur (dominant majority of scholars) took the above-quoted Hadeeth as evidence on the permissibility. There are disputes concerning this issue because it was an individual incident.

The fat mentioned in the Hadeeth may be from the fats rendered Halaal for the Jews, such as the fats adhering to the back or the entrails, and the like. Finally, Allaah knows best. The following Hadeeth serves as a better evidence as it was authentically reported in the Saheeh: **[The people of Khaybar presented to the Messenger of Allaah** (peace be upon him) **a roasted sheep after poisoning its foreleg. The Prophet** (peace be upon him) **liked to eat the foreleg and when he took a morsel of it, the foreleg told him that it was poisoned and so he spat it out. This poisoned morsel affected the front teeth and aorta of Allaah's Messenger** (peace be upon him). **Bishr ibn al-Bara' ibn Ma`rur ate with the Prophet** (peace be upon him) **and died as a result. The Prophet** (peace be upon him) **gave his orders to kill the Jewess who poisoned the sheep and her name was Zaynab. She was, thus, killed due to her causing the death of Bishr ibn al-Bara'.]** The Hadeeth proves that the Prophet (peace be upon him) and his Sahaabah (Companions) intended to eat from the sheep without asking whether the Jews had discarded the fats which were rendered unlawful for them or not. In another Hadeeth: **[A Jewish man offered the Messenger of Allaah** (peace be upon him) **some barley bread and rancid fat]**. End quote of what Al-Haafidh ibn Katheer (may Allaah be merciful to him) said. It indicates that it is Halaal for Muslims to eat from the slaughtered animals of the People of the Book according to Ijma`. The same permissibility applies to the fats of their slaughtered animals even if they are considered unlawful for them because of the Hadeeth quoted above. This is the opinion of the Jumhur which opposes the viewpoint of the followers of Imaam Maalik (may Allaah be merciful with all of them).