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## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS CONCERNING THE MEAT OF THE AHLUL-KITAAB (THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK)

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[Q1]: Is it permissible to eat poultry which is sold in the markets on the basis that it is meat of the People of the Book...or is it impermissible on the basis that it is a carcass slaughtered by unknown means (i.e. it was done by cutting off the head or electrocution or some such means.) and are the *ahlul-kitaab* today truly to be considered in this ruling [as those of the past]?

[A1]: Yes, eating the poultry is permissible because that which is slaughtered by the *ahlul-kitaab* today is just as what was slaughtered by *ahlul-kitaab* in the time of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

The *ahlul-kitaab* are of the *kuffaar* (disbelievers) whether they are in the time of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) or now. Allaah says in His Noble Book,

**"Surely, they have disbelieved who say: "Allaah is the Messiah ['Iesa (Jesus)], son of Maryam (Mary)." But the Messiah ['Iesa (Jesus)] said: "O Children of Israel! Worship Allaah, my Lord and your Lord." Verily, whosoever sets up**

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**partners in worship with Allaah, then Allaah has forbidden Paradise for him, and the Fire will be his abode. And for the Dhaalimoon (polytheists and wrongdoers) there are no helpers.**

**Surely, disbelievers are those who said: "Allaah is the third of the three (in a Trinity)." But there is no ilah (god) (none who has the right to be worshipped) but One Ilah (God -Allah). And if they cease not from what they say, verily, a painful torment will befall the disbelievers among them."**

[Sooratul-Ma'idah, 5:72-73]

Allaah also says in the same chapter:

**"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, etc., milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits, etc.). The food (slaughtered cattle, eatable animals, etc.) of the people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians) is lawful to you and yours is lawful to them. (Lawful to you in marriage) are chaste women from the believers and chaste women from those who were given the Scripture (Jews and Christians) before your time, when you have given their due Mahr (bridal money given by the husband to his wife at the time of marriage), desiring chastity (i.e. taking them in legal wedlock) not committing illegal sexual intercourse, nor taking them as girl-friends. And whosoever disbelieves in the Oneness of Allaah and in all the other Articles of Faith [i.e. His (Allaah's), Angels, His Holy Books, His Messengers, the Day of Resurrection and Al-Qadar (Divine Preordainments)], then fruitless is his work, and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers."** [Sooratul-Ma'idah, 5:5]

As far as the methodology of the slaughtering, we do not inquire about the method because if an action has occurred '*min ahlihi*' [at the hands of those suited to perform such an act] the conditions surrounding that act are not asked about.

We find in saheehul-bukhaaree: "It is related by A'aishah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) that a group of people said to the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) 'Some people came to us with some meat about which we didn't know whether the name of

Allah was mentioned over or not' and he (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) replied 'sammoo' [Say the name of Allaah] over it yourselves and then eat. She [A'aishah] said that these people had just recently been from the *kuffaar* [i.e. just became Muslim and the question was not asked as to the method of slaughter].

This rule therefore applies to the Jews and the Christians about whom we don't know whether or not they have mentioned Allaah's name or not because their slaughtered meat is *halaal* [permissible] to us.

**[Q2]:** Please clarify the *fatwaa* (ruling) - esteemed Shaykh - If a Muslim goes to the markets and eating places in a Christian land and purchases the lamb, beef or chicken and does not ask about how it was slaughtered?

**[A2]:** Yes, he does not ask about the method of slaughter.

**[Q3]:** What if he is informed however, that the meat has been stunned by electric shock, or has been choked or shot? What is the ruling for meat slaughtered like this? Is it considered a carcass? [Which is impermissible to eat]

**[A3]:** It is not permissible if it is known with certainty because it would be considered a carcass.

**[Q4]:** Can we understand from the *hadeeth* of A'aishah (*radiyallaahu 'anha*) which is related in the *fatwaa* that the question which was posed by the people to the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was only in relation to whether Allah's name was mentioned over the animal being slaughtered and it was not about the actual method of slaughter?

**[A4]:** Yes, they did ask about the mentioning of the name of Allaah and not the actual method of slaughtering and it is evident in the *hadeeth* that it is not necessary to ask about either.

**[Q5]:** Is it possible to say that if there are stores in a city where the Muslim lives and those stores carry meat slaughtered according to the Islaamic method - even

if it is more expensive - that it is not then permissible to buy the meat of the Christians?

[A5]: No it is not possible to say that because the slaughtered meat of the Christians and the Jews is *halaal*. However, whoever leaves it [doesn't eat it] out of a sense of piety [*tawar'an<sup>2</sup>*], we see no fault upon him.

[Q6]: One of the readers asks about a relation from 'Alee Ibn Abee Taalib (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) in which he reportedly said: "Do not eat the meat slaughtered by Banu Taglab because they adhere to Christianity by drinking alcohol." Can this be then used as a proof considering the Christians of today, the majority of whom drink alcohol, that it is not permissible to eat their slaughtered meat?

[A6]: I do not know the authenticity of this statement [from the Sahabah] and if it is authentic its meaning would be that they [Banu Taglab] were not actually on the religion of the Christians and therefore they would not fall under the ruling of permissibility of their slaughtered meat.

[Q7]: If it is known that some of the slaughterhouses in this country slaughter sheep and cattle along with swine, is it permissible to eat that meat especially when the same instruments are used to slaughter both at the same time?

[A7]: In this case, if we know that the knives are used for both then the meat should be washed and it will be purified through washing.

[Q8]: Is it possible - esteemed Shaykh - for you to address us with a word to the Muslims in the Western countries about the obligation of staying far away from disobedience [to Allah and His Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*)] and *haraam* things and doubtful matters because we are aware of some of them being negligent in relation to some major sins such as not praying or illicit sex or drinking alcohol yet he is distressed or makes complicated the eating of meat which is not slaughtered according to Islamic method?

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<sup>2</sup> *Tawar'a* or *wara'* is when a person has such piety that he will avoid even that which is permissible to do for what is even better from wanting to please Allaah and also eliminating any possibility of doing something wrong.

[A8]: My advice to them is to have *taqwaa* and to fear Allah's punishment and to remember the Day of Meeting, a day which the excuses of those who wrong themselves will be of no avail. A day when the parent will not afford their offspring anything nor can the offspring do anything for the parent. A day when they will all be raised from their graves barefoot, and naked. We ask Allah for all guidance and success.

Muhammad Saalih Al-'Uthaymeen (*rahimahullaah*) 2/28/1414 (17/08/93)

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