138842 - Ruling on eating snake meat as a remedy

the question

What is the ruling on eating snake meat as a remedy?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

The majority of scholars are of the view that it is not permissible to eat the meat of vipers and snakes.

An-Nawawi (may Allah have mercy on him) said in *al-Majmu'* (9/16-17):

The views of the scholars regarding the vermin of the earth such as snakes, scorpions, black beetles, woodlice, mice and the like, our view is that they are haram. This is the view of Abu Hanifah, Ahmad and Dawud. Malik said: They are halal. End quote.

The correct view is the view of the majority, for several reasons:

1. Snakes are among the animals that catch prey with their fangs, and the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) forbade eating any wild animal that has fangs. Agreed upon.

2. Snakes are among the animals that the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) instructed us to kill. It was narrated from Ibn 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) that he heard the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) delivering a khutbah from the minbar in which he said: "Kill snakes..." Agreed upon.

3. They are regarded as repulsive. Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{and makes lawful for them the good things and prohibits for them the bad things} [al-A‘raf 7:157].

The scholars of the Permanent Committee said:

It is not permissible to eat mice, snakes, venomous insects or monkeys, because they catch prey with their fangs, and the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) forbade eating any wild animal that has fangs, and because they are regarded as repulsive, and Allah, may He be exalted, says describing the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him):

{and [he] makes lawful for them the good things and prohibits for them the bad things} [al-A ‘raf 7:157].

End quote. *Fatawa al-Lajnah ad-Da’imah* (22/292).

Secondly:

The Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) forbade treating sickness with that which is haram, according to the report narrated by Abu Dawud (3874) from Abu’d-Darda’ (may Allah be pleased with him), who said: The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said: “Allah has sent down the disease and the remedy, and He has created for every disease a remedy, so treat disease but do not treat it with anything that is haram.” Classed as sahih by al-Albani in *Sahih al-Jami‘* (1762).

Ibn Mas‘ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said regarding intoxicants: Allah has not put your healing in that which He has forbidden to you. Narrated by al-Bukhari in a mu‘allaq report (5/2129).

Muslim (1948) narrated from Wa’il ibn Hajar (may Allah be pleased with him) that Tariq ibn Suwayd al-Ju‘fi asked the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) about khamr, and he forbade him to make it or expressed his disapproval of his making it. He said: I only make it as a remedy. He said: “It is not a remedy, but it is a disease.”

The scholars of the Permanent Committee were asked:

There is a man who uses snakes for medicinal purposes, and he claims that this is permissible because of circumstances and necessity. The way in which he uses the snake is that he picks it up and puts it in a pot of ghee when it is still alive, and the pot is boiling on the stove. After that, he treats people with the ghee in which he cooked the snake, and the one who uses it becomes slightly intoxicated. Is it permissible to treat sickness with this ghee, if it is proven to be beneficial? Is it permissible to put the snake into the ghee when it is boiling on the stove?

The scholars of the committee replied:

Firstly: it is not permissible to put a living animal into boiling liquid, because of what that involves of cruelty to animals, which is prohibited according to the words of the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): “When you kill, kill well [without unnecessary suffering]…”

Secondly: it is not permissible to treat sickness with snakes or with ghee in which snakes have been cooked, because it is not permissible to eat them, according to the more correct of the two scholarly views. Their dead meat [meat that has not been slaughtered in the prescribed fashion] is impure (najis), and treating sickness with that which is haram is also haram."(*Fatawa al-Lajnah ad-Da’imah* 25/25-26).

Conclusion: it is not permissible to eat the meat of snakes, whether for medicinal purposes or for any other purpose. The foods and medicines that Allah has permitted are sufficient and there is no need for that which is haram.

See also the answer to question no. 10951 .

And Allah knows best.