40530 - Can We Take Medicine that Contains Alcohol?

the question

What is the ruling on medicines that contain a percentage of alcohol?

Summary of answer

It is not permissible to mix medicines with intoxicants, but if it is mixed with alcohol, if drinking a lot of it will cause intoxication, it is haram to handle it and drink it, whether a small amount or a large amount. If drinking a lot of it will not cause intoxication, then it is permissible to handle it and drink it.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Is it permissible to mix medicines with alcohol?

It is not permissible to mix medicines with alcohol , because alcohol must be thrown away. Abu Sa'id al-Khudri said: We had some wine belonging to an orphan, and when al-Maidah was revealed (i.e., the prohibition of khamr or alcohol), I asked the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) about it and I said, "It belongs to the orphan." He said: "Pour it away." Narrated by al-Tirmidhi, 1263; classed as sahih by al-Albani in Sahih al-Tirmidhi)

Can we take medicine that contains alcohol?

If the medicine is mixed with alcohol , and the percentage of alcohol is so great that this medicine is intoxicating, then it is khamr and it is haram to take it.

If the percentage of alcohol is very low and it does not intoxicate, then it is permissible to take it.

It says in Fatawa al-Lajnah al-Daimah (22/110):

“It is not permissible to mix medicines with intoxicants , but if it is mixed with alcohol, if drinking a lot of it will cause intoxication, it is haram to handle it and drink it, whether a small amount or a large amount. If drinking a lot of it will not cause intoxication, then it is permissible to handle it and drink it.”

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymin said:

“With regard to some medicines that contain alcohol, if the effect of the alcohol in the medicine can be seen in the form of intoxication, then it is haram, but if no effect is seen, and the alcohol is only added to it as a preservative, then there is nothing wrong with it, because the alcoholic content does not have any effect.” (Liqa-at al-Bab al-Maftuhah, 3/231)

And Allah knows best.