71181 - Ruling on dissecting frogs for scientific purposes

the question

Is it permissible to dissect frogs when required for study purposes?
Not dissecting it may result in the student failing that course or being deprived of some credits which may prevent him from among the top students in his class, so he would not get a position as a professor's assistant in college?.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

The ruling on this issue depends on examining two important issues:

Firstly:

The ruling on killing frogs and what the scholars have said about that.

The scholars differed concerning this issue and there are two views:

1 – That it is makrooh. This is the view of the Maaliki madhhab and of some of the Shaafa'is and Hanbalis.

See: al-Tamheed (15/178); Sharh al-'Umdah by Ibn Taymiyah (3/148).

2 – That it is haraam. This is the view of the Hanafi, Shaafa'i and Hanbali madhhabs, and of Ibn Hazm, and is the view favoured by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyah.

See: Mushkil al-Athaar by al-Tahhaawi (2/35); al-Majmoo' (9/29); al-Mughni (9/338); al-Muhalla (7/225); al-Fataawa al-Kubra (2/139).

The evidence for that is the report narrated from 'Abd al-Rahmaan ibn 'Uthmaan (may Allaah be pleased with him), according to which a doctor asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah

be upon him) about using frogs in medicine, and the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) forbade killing them.

Narrated by Abu Dawood (5269), classed as saheeh by al-Nawawi in al-Majmoo' (9/34).

We have already mentioned that this is the favoured view, in the answer to questions no. 1919 and 10220.

Secondly:

If it is necessary to dissect frogs, there is no sin in it in sha Allah. The scholars have ruled that it is permissible to dissect the body of a Muslim for the purposes of criminal investigations or preventative medicine. This has been explained in the answer to question no. 11962.

So it is more likely that it is permissible to dissect the bodies of animals – which are less sacrosanct than humans – for the purpose of scientific research, if there is a need for that.

We have previously quoted fatwas dealing with this. See the answer to question no. 8509.

It should be noted that the student must treat the animals that he is dissecting properly; he should anaesthetize them fully and hasten to kill them as soon as the dissection is over, because the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Allaah has prescribed proficiency in all things, so if you kill, kill well, and if you slaughter, slaughter well. Let one of you sharpen his blade and spare suffering to the animal." Narrated by Muslim, 1955.

Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen was asked in Fataawa al-Haram al-Makki (1166):

We are studying in one of the universities in the faculty of science, biology division. During our studies we need to dissect some animals, such as frogs, rats and the like, for the purposes of learning and studying. What is the ruling on these dissections?

He replied:

If there is a need for it, there is nothing wrong with dissection, but he should do something for this

animal so that it will not feel any pain at the time of dissection, and he must note that in the case of those animals that are naajis (impure) after death, he has to purify himself of them.

And Allaah knows best.