111868 - It is not appropriate to ask how meat and chicken are slaughtered

the question

One day I invited my friends and colleagues at work to lunch, and when they came, I served the meal to them, which included some dishes of barbecued chicken that we made at home. One of them – who is known for his piety and religious commitment – asked me about it, whether it was locally produced or imported, and I told him that it was imported, and that I thought it was French. He refrained from eating it, so I asked him why, and he said: Because it is haraam. I said to him: How do you know that? He replied: I heard some of the shaykhs saying that. I hope that you can clarify for us the correct Islamic ruling.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

With regard to meat that is imported from non-Muslim countries, if those who slaughter the meat are from among the People of the Book, namely Jews and Christians, then it is permissible to eat it, and it is not appropriate to ask how it was slaughtered, or whether they mentioned the name of Allah over it or not. That is because the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) ate the lamb that was given to him by the Jewish woman in Khaybar, and he ate the meal to which a Jewish man invited him, and it contained rendered fat, but the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) did not ask how they had slaughtered it, or whether they had mentioned the name of Allah over it.

In *Saheeh al-Bukhaari* it is narrated that some people said to the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him): Some people bring us meat, and we do not know whether the name of Allah was mentioned over it or not. He said: “Say Bismillah over it yourselves and eat it.” ‘Aa’ishah (may Allah be pleased with her), who narrated the hadith, said: They had only recently become Muslim.

These hadiths indicate that it is not appropriate to ask about how the slaughtering was done if the one who did it is qualified to do it. This highlights the wisdom of Islamic teachings and how Islam makes things easy for people, because if people were required to find out whether conditions are met even though the one who did the action is qualified, that would cause a great deal of difficulty and hardship, and that would make Islam a religion of hardship and difficulty.

But if the meat came from a foreign country where those who do the slaughtering are people whose meat it is not permissible to eat, such as the Zoroastrians and idol worshippers, and those who do not follow any religion, then it is not permissible to eat it, because Allah, may He be exalted, has not permitted the meat of any non-Muslims except the meat of those who were given the Book, namely the Jews and Christians.

If we are uncertain as to whether the slaughterman was one whose meat is permissible or one whose meat is not permissible, then that is not a problem [i.e., if most of the people in that country are those whose meat is permissible].

The fuqaha' (may Allah have mercy on them) said: If there is meat that is found in a land where meat slaughtered by most of its people is permissible, then it is halaal. But in that case it is more appropriate to avoid it and choose that concerning which there is no doubt.

For example, if the meat comes from those whose meat is permissible, but some of them slaughter it in the manner prescribed in Islam, in which the blood is allowed to flow out by means of slaughtering it with a blade, and it is not slaughtered using teeth or nails, and some of them slaughter it in a way other than the manner prescribed in Islam, but most of them do it in the first manner, then there is nothing wrong with eating meat that comes from there, based on the actions of the majority. But it is better to avoid it, in order to be on the safe side. End quote.

Shaykh Muhammad ibn 'Uthaymeen (may Allah have mercy on him).

Fataawa 'Ulama' al-Bilaad al-Haraam (p. 255, 256).