249339 - Verdict on adding a small amount of alcohol or wine to food or drink

the question

You have a verdict stating that it is permissible to use vanilla which contains alcohol. This ruling has made people in Britain think that one can use food which contains alcohol or wine, on the basis that they evaporate after cooking the food, as stated in your verdict. We hope that you can discuss this verdict again, because it has led to confusion among many women here, and they have begun to buy all those types of foods – there is no power and no strength except with Allah. There are some who say that if it is permissible to buy such foods, then adding alcohol to food when cooking it is also permissible. By Allah, this is a serious problem, so – please – I urge you to discuss the issue again, because the sisters took the verdict from your website.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Firstly:

Alcohol is an intoxicant and subject to the same rulings as wine, so it is not permissible to deliberately add it to food, medicine, or anything else.

But if it has already been added to something, then the sin is on the one who added it.

Then we should try to find out about the amount of alcohol in the food or medicine. If the amount of alcohol in it is so small that it is absorbed into the food, so that no trace of it remains and the one who eats or drinks a lot of this food or medicine will not become intoxicated, then there is nothing wrong with consuming it.

This is contrary to the case where the traces of alcohol or wine remain discernible, such as some

types of chocolate, for example, to which some alcohol has been added. In this case, it is not permissible to sell, buy or consume such foods.

What we said about vanilla is not excluded from that. We did not say that it is permissible to use alcohol in it; rather we said that it is permissible to consume it if no trace of alcohol is discernible in it.

It says in *Fatawa al-Lajnah ad-Da'imah* (22/123): The way in which vinegar is made in Egypt involves using nabeedh or beer, which are then put in sawdust and another substance is added to it until the nabeedh ferments and gives us Egyptian vinegar, as is explained in the science curriculum for students in the third year of preparatory school. What is the ruling on consuming this vinegar?

Answer: It is not permissible to add anything that could cause intoxication to something that is intended to be used as medicine, food or drink, or in anything that is intended to be used to make food, drink or condiments, whether that intoxicating substance is nabeedh, beer or anything else.

A fatwa was issued by the Permanent Committee stating the ruling on mixing medicine with alcohol, and the ruling on consuming it. The fatwa stated: It is not permissible to mix medicines with alcohol that causes intoxication.

But if it is already mixed with alcohol, it is permissible to use it if the amount of alcohol is very small and no trace of it is discernible in the colour, taste or smell of the medicine, and drinking it does not cause intoxication. Otherwise, it is prohibited to use that with which alcohol has been mixed.

'Abdullah ibn Qa'ud, 'Abdullah ibn Ghadyan, 'Abd ar-Razzaaq 'Afifi, 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn 'Abdillah ibn Baz. End quote.

So you should point out the difference between adding alcohol or wine to food or medicine, which is prohibited, because alcohol must be poured away and destroyed, and it is not permissible to use it, and using food or medicine which contains alcohol or has been treated with alcohol. The latter is

subject to further discussion; if this mixture does not cause intoxication in larger amounts, and no trace remains in it of the alcohol, then it is not regarded as khamr (intoxicant) and it is permissible to consume it.

For more information, please see questions no. 59899 , 177030 , 201520 and 198536 .

And Allah knows best.