



Animals such as cows, sheep, goats, deer, moose, chickens, ducks, game birds, etc., are also Halal, but they must be **Zabihah** (slaughtered according to Islamic Law) in order for their meat to be suitable for consumption. The procedure is as follows: the animal must be slaughtered by a Muslim. The animal should be put down on the ground (or held it if it is small) and its throat should be slit with a very sharp knife to make sure that the three main blood vessels are cut. While cutting the throat of the animal (without severing it), the slaughterer must pronounce the name of Allah or recite a blessing which contains the name of Allah, such as "Bismillah Allah-u-Akbar".

Why does the animal have to be slaughtered by a Muslim? Can't we eat the meat of animals slaughtered by the People of the Book (Jews and Christians)?

Allah Ta'ala says in the Noble Qur'an:

'Today I have made permissible for you pure things and the food of those who were given the Book (Ahlul-Kitaab) is also Halal for you'. (Qur'an 5:4)

Overtly the above Aayat reads that the Zabihah of the Ahlul-Kitaab (People of the Book) is permissible, but the fundamental principle must be understood in order to understand the Qur'an i.e. 'One part of the Qur'an explains the other'. Therefore, this verse should be understood in the light of another verse relating to the same matter: 'Do not eat unless Allah's name has been taken and this (not taking Allah's name) practice is transgression' (Quran 6:121)

While the former verse explicitly states that the Zabihah of the Ahlul-Kitaab is permissible and the latter says, 'Do not eat unless Allah's name has been taken', in the light of both these verses, it is understood that the Zabihah of the Ahlul-kitaab is permissible only if the name of Allah is taken at the time of slaughtering. The Ahlul-kitaab used to take Allah's name when slaughtering an animal, therefore, their Zabihah was also Halal for Muslims. It is for this same reason that an animal slaughtered by the Mushrikeen (polytheists), etc. is not permissible. The Ahlul-kitaab of today are recognized by name, less faith. There is no guarantee that they take the name of Allah/God when slaughtering an animal. Furthermore, they cannot be anymore trusted in matters pertaining to Halal/Haram.

Since there is uncertainty in the above slaughter manner, the Jurists are unanimous that it is not permissible to consume meat which is doubtful. Unless there is certainty that the Ahlul-kitaab read the 'Tasmiyah' i.e. take the name of God when slaughtering an animal then only will the meat be permissible. We suggest that the Muslims in the U.S.A. and U.K. slaughter the animals themselves. A committee be appointed and look into ways to facilitate for Halal meat slaughtered by Muslims. This will make them independent from Christian/Jewish sources.

Another proposition may be that the meat sold on the market are packed, sealed and stamped by a Muslim organization consisting of reliable scholars and Ulama who have proper Islamic knowledge of the principles pertaining to Halal/Haram of the Shari'ah (Islamic Law).

and Allah Ta'ala Knows Best

The content under "Why...?" is courtesy of Mufti Ebrahim Desai, Madrassah In'aamiyyah, Camperdown, South Africa, and Ask-Imam.com .