

143630 - Ruling on imported meat

the question

We live in Japan, and as they are not Ahl al-Kitaab, we do not eat the meat or chicken that is sold in shops and restaurants, but we buy meat from some websites and cook it at home. But we have found out that there is a restaurant that serves ready-made meals in which they use meat and chicken imported from Australia and Denmark. Is it permissible for us to say Bismillah over it and eat it, on the basis that it is imported from countries whose people are Ahl al-Kitaab? Or is it not permissible for us to do that?

Detailed answer

With regard to meat that is imported from the lands of the Jews and Christians, there are three scenarios:

The first scenario:

Where we know from seeing it ourselves or trustworthy reports that the meat was slaughtered in the Islamic manner, which is by cutting the two veins in the neck, whilst mentioning the name of Allah over it.

In this case, the meat is undoubtedly halaal, because Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning): *{and the food of those who were given the Scripture is lawful for you} [al-Maa'idah 5:5]*, meaning meat slaughtered by them.

See also the answer to question no. [3261](#) .

The second scenario:

Where we know that the way in which it is slaughtered is not the Islamic way, such as if it is done by strangling, or stunning, or a violent blow, or by striking the head, and the like, or that the name of Allah is not mentioned over it.

In this case, the meat is haraam, because Allah, may He be exalted, says (interpretation of the meaning):

{Prohibited to you are dead animals, blood, the flesh of swine, and that which has been dedicated to other than Allah , and [those animals] killed by strangling or by a violent blow or by a head-long fall or by the goring of horns, and those from which a wild animal has eaten, except what you [are able to] slaughter [before its death], and those which are sacrificed on stone altars} [al-Maa'idah 5:3]

{And do not eat of that upon which the name of Allah has not been mentioned, for indeed, it is grave disobedience} [al-An'aam 6:121].

See also the answers to questions no. [83362](#) and [88206](#) .

The third scenario:

When we do not know how it was slaughtered, and we do not know in which manner it was done.

In this case, there is some doubt and hesitation concerning the meat.

The texts which were narrated from the Prophet (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) indicate that it is halaal and that we should not ask about the way in which it was slaughtered or try to find out about that, so as to make things easier for people, and because the basic principle concerning actions and dealings is that they are valid if they are done by those who are qualified to do them.

The evidence for that has been discussed in detail in the answer to question no. [111868](#) .

[The above has been summarised from a lengthy fatwa that was issued by Shaykh Ibn 'Uthaymeen. See: *Abhaath Hay'at Kibaar al-'Ulama'* (2/677)].

But you should ascertain whether the one who did the slaughtering is one of the People of the Book, because the permissibility of the meat is dependent upon the slaughterman being a Jew or a Christian.

If we do not know the religion of the one who did the slaughtering, then in this case we must differentiate between types of countries:

The first type:

Countries in which most of the population are People of the Book. In this case, meat imported from these countries is deemed to be halaal unless we learn otherwise.

Shaykh Ibn ‘Uthaymeen said: If it is imported from a country where most of the population are those whose meat is permissible, then based on what appears to be the case, their meat may be deemed permissible, based on the majority, unless it is known that the one who did the slaughtering was someone whose meat is not permissible. In that case, it cannot be deemed to be permissible because there is an impediment to ruling on the basis of what appears to be the case.

End quote from *Abhaath Hay’at Kibaar al-‘Ulama’* (2/683).

The second type:

Countries in which most of the population are not People of the Book. In this case, it is not permissible to eat meat imported from them.

As Denmark and Australia are countries in which the majority of the population is Christian, there is nothing wrong with eating meat imported from them, unless we come to know that it has been slaughtered in a manner other than the way prescribed in Islamic teachings.

This has to do with the ruling on whether this meat is halaal or haraam.

But now there are strong doubts concerning this meat, because there are so many reports that they do not slaughter it in the manner prescribed in Islamic teachings; in fact the laws of some of these countries forbid slaughtering meat in the manner prescribed in Islamic teachings. So we should refrain from eating this meat as much as possible, whilst not being absolutely certain that it is haraam.

And Allah knows best.