

HALAL AND HARAM MEAT

ACCORDING TO THE ISLAMIC PRINCIPLES

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NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Various problems and issues related to the understanding of the rules of Shari'ah occur as a result of the unawareness of the many Quranic ayahs and Ahadith by some people. These individuals misguide themselves and others by misinterpreting the Holy Quran and Hadith.

The rules of slaughtering animals are one such area in which people have concocted their own rules, completely ignoring the rules of the Holy Quran and Hadith. Because of the problems associated with this topic, many people have suggested that I write an essay about it in light of the Holy Quran and Hadith. Upon their repeated requests and persistence, I took on the responsibility to write this booklet on halal and haram meat. May Allah guide me in this earnest attempt.

I have refrained from expressing my personal opinions on the subject; rather the issue is addressed completely through the Holy Quran and Hadith. May Allah ﷻ guide us towards making the right choices for ourselves in this regard, and may He protect us all from haram.

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CHAPTER 1

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

الحمد لله رب العالمين، والصلاة والسلام على رسوله محمد وعلى آله وصحبه اجمعين

Food and drink, being the basic needs of human beings, have been addressed in detail and clearly explained in the Holy Quran and Hadith. This is especially true regarding the issue of halal and haram meat which is discussed quite extensively. That is why there is a consensus among a great majority of Islamic scholars regarding this issue.

Unfortunately, we choose not to follow the established rules of Shari'ah based on the Holy Quran and Hadith. Instead, we derive our own rules to suit our needs and circumstances with little care if they are contradictory to the commands of Allah ﷻ and his beloved Prophet ﷺ.

The learned among us, brainwashed by western education, do not even see the need to seek out the exact rulings of Shari'ah because some think it is backward and fundamentalist. Influenced by western thinking, some also claim that Islamic Shari'ah should be modified to meet the needs of the time. Those who have received a little Islamic education would readily provide different interpretations of the Quranic verses to fit their needs and the needs of those who they serve. May Allah ﷻ protect us all from such 'Islamic scholars' and from such hypocrisy. Whenever I encounter such an experience it reminds me of the Quranic verse:

يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي بِهِ كَثِيرًا

Which means, "(Allah) leads astray many with this (Quran) and guides many others with this (Quran)." May Allah ﷻ save us from going astray and guide us to the right path.

First, it should be kept in mind that in order to learn about any particular issue from the Holy Quran and Hadith, one must be thoroughly well versed in the Arabic language. We must never attempt to understand and especially render a judgement about any issue of Shari'ah based on the translations of the Holy Quran and Hadith. Since translations can never be perfectly accurate and generally do not reflect the true spirit of the message, one bears the risk of misunderstanding an issue based on the translator's perception of it. Thus, the whole foundation on which we would base our interpretation would be erroneous. If the foundation is wrong then the structure we erect on it would be wrong as well.

Second, it is essential that one know the rules governing the interpretation of Quran and Hadith. Without this knowledge, we are also very likely to misinterpret the commands of Allah ﷻ and His Prophet ﷺ. Someone may argue that Allah ﷻ has mentioned in the Quran,

وَلَقَدْ يَسَّرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ

which means, "We have made the Quran easy"; so why must we make the effort to learn this and that to understand the true meaning of Quran? One should bear in mind that whenever and wherever Allah ﷻ says in the Holy Quran, "We have made the Quran easy", He also adds the word لِلذِّكْرِ which means "To understand and remember," and not to deduce interpretations of your own preference. If the Holy Quran was made easy for everyone to interpret and to deduce the commands of Allah ﷻ and the practices of Shari'ah, there would have been no need for sending a prophet and there would not have been any uniformity in the practice of Deen.

Imam Ghazali Rahimahullah, as well as other scholars, has mentioned fifteen branches of knowledge which one must acquire in order to gain insight into any particular issue from the Holy Quran and Hadith. To provide an example, one of these branches of knowledge is the knowledge of the background and circumstances under which the Quranic verses were revealed. Without this knowledge, it would be impossible to understand the meaning and rationale of many verses in the Holy Quran. Consider the following verse:

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ جُنَاحٌ فِيمَا طَعِمُوا إِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا وَآمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَآمَنُوا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَأَحْسَنُوا وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“Those who believe and do righteous good deeds, there is no sin on them for what they ate, if they fear Allah and believe and do righteous good deeds, and again fear Allah and believe, and once again fear Allah and do good deeds with Ihsan. And Allah loves the good-doers.” (5:93)

If one looks at the literal translation of the above verse, one gets the impression that whatever one eats, whether it is halal or haram, will not make any difference as long as one believes in Allah ﷻ, performs good deeds and is mindful of his or her duties. It is only when we learn the background of and the circumstances under which this verse was revealed, that we truly understand the meaning of the verse.

Let us examine the background of this verse. When the verse forbidding alcohol was revealed a number of companions expressed their concern about those who died before the revelation of this verse. The above verse was revealed to respond to this concern and to ensure the companions that as long as the person believed in Allah ﷻ, was pious, God fearing and mindful of his or her duties to Allah ﷻ, he or she will not be punished for his previous drinking; if he is to be punished, it will not be because of his drinking but because of his lack of faith and fear of Allah ﷻ.

The above example clearly demonstrates how essential it is to have the knowledge of the rules dealing with the interpretation of the Holy Quran. Without this knowledge, one can easily go astray.

There are many such examples in the Holy Quran and Hadith. It is sufficient to say that one must acquire the knowledge of the fifteen subjects mentioned by Imam Ghazali Rahimahullah if one intends to deduce the rules of Shari'ah himself from the Holy Quran and Hadith. If one renders judgements from the Quran and Hadith without this knowledge, this person will then lead himself and other innocent Muslims astray. May Allah ﷻ protect us from such half-baked 'scholars'.

Third, one should remember that when we investigate an issue through the Quran and Hadith, we should look at all the Quranic verses and Hadith relating to that topic. Only then will one be able to see the whole picture of what Allah ﷻ and his Prophet ﷺ have taught us about this particular issue. Take alcohol for example, if one reads the verse:

لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَأَنْتُمْ سُكَارَىٰ

which means "Do not pray when you are drunk" (4:43), one may easily misunderstand and claim that drinking is permitted in the Holy Quran as long as one is not praying while drunk because drinking is forbidden only at the time of prayer. This person will not be able to understand the rules of Shari'ah about drinking because of his lack of knowledge of other verses of the Holy Quran and Hadith dealing with the commands of Allah ﷻ about drinking. He may not realize that this verse was revealed at the beginning of Islam and that another verse forbidding it altogether was revealed later on. The verse reads as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ ۝ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانُ أَنْ يُوقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَالْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَن ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلَاةِ فَهَلْ أَنْتُمْ مُنْتَهُونَ

O believers, wine, gambling, (ungodly) shrines and divining devices are all abominable works of Satan; therefore refrain from these so that you may attain true success. Indeed Satan intends to sow enmity and hatred among you by means of wine and gambling, and to prevent you from the remembrance of Allah and from Salah. Will you not, therefore, abstain from these things? (5:90-91)

Since my intention in this brief booklet is not to discuss the rules of interpretation of the Holy Quran and Hadith, we will not go into the details of the fifteen branches of knowledge described by Imam Ghazali Rahimahullah. However, those who are interested in learning more about them may consult Imam Ghazali's writings, such as Ihya Al-Uloom.

CHAPTER 2

Allah ﷻ mentions in Surah Al-Baqarah:

إِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةَ وَالدَّمَ وَلَحْمَ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ بِهِ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ فَمَنِ اضْطُرَّ غَيْرَ بَاغٍ وَلَا عَادٍ فَلَا إِثْمَ عَلَيْهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

He has forbidden for you only the: 1) dead animals, 2) blood, 3) pork, and 4) any animal slaughtered in a name other than Allah (2:173)

As I have previously mentioned, it is not sufficient to study only one verse from the Holy Quran then deduce the rules about an issue; rather we must consider all the verses that may be directly or indirectly related to the issue. When we search the Holy Quran for verses related to the slaughtered animal (zabiha) and halal and haram meat, we find that there are a number of other things that are forbidden. Consider the third verse of Surah Al-Ma'idah:

حُرِّمَتْ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَيْتَةُ وَالدَّمُ وَلَحْمُ الْخِنْزِيرِ وَمَا أُهِلَّ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ بِهِ وَالْمُنْخَنِقَةُ وَالْمَوْقُوذَةُ وَالْمُتَرَدِّيَةُ وَالنَّطِيحَةُ وَمَا أَكَلَ السَّبُعُ إِلَّا مَا ذَكَّيْتُمْ وَمَا ذُبِحَ عَلَى النُّصُبِ وَأَنْ تَسْتَقْسِمُوا بِالْأَزْلَامِ

“Forbidden for you are: 1) dead animal, 2) blood, 3) the flesh of pork, 4) any animal slaughtered in the name other than Allah, 5) or killed by strangling, 6) or through a deadly blow, 7) or by falling from a height, 8) or killed by (the goring of) horns, 9) or eaten by wild beasts, 10) or the one which has been sacrificed on altars (or at a shrine).” (5:3)

If we take only the first verse from Surah Baqarah mentioned above, we may believe that only four types of meat and blood are forbidden (haram) and everything else is permitted (halal). Even in the second verse quoted from Surah Ma'idah, all other forbidden animals, such as lions, dogs, tigers, etc., have not been mentioned although every Muslim knows these beasts are also forbidden for consumption. We find these details only in Ahadith.

Similarly, according to the Holy Quran, an animal slaughtered without reciting the Takbir (the name of Allah) is also forbidden:

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذَكَرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَإِنَّهُ لَفِسْقٌ وَإِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ لَيُوحُونَ إِلَى أَوْلِيَائِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوكُمْ وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ

"And do not eat the flesh of an animal over which Allah's name has not been mentioned (at the time of slaughter); this is indeed sinful. Surely, Satan puts doubts

and objections into the minds of their friends, so that they should dispute with you, but if you obey them, you will surely be Mushriks." (6:121)

In this verse, Allah ﷻ makes it explicitly clear that it is forbidden to consume the animal upon which the Takbir was not recited at the time of slaughtering. It follows then that it is essential to say the Takbir (reciting the name of Allah) when slaughtering the animal.

Imam Raghیب Asfahani has mentioned seven verses from the Holy Quran which support reciting the Takbir when slaughtering an animal for consumption:

1. فَكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ بِآيَاتِهِ مُؤْمِنِينَ

"So eat of that (flesh of the animal) over which Allah's name has been mentioned, if you truly believe in His Revelations." (6:118)

Allah mentions that if we truly believe in the Holy Quran, we must eat only that meat of the animal on which the name of Allah ﷻ was recited at the time of its slaughtering.

2. وَمَا لَكُمْ أَلَّا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا ذُكِرَ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَقَدْ فَصَّلَ لَكُمْ مَا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ إِلَّا مَا اضْطُرِرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ وَإِنَّ كَثِيرًا لَيُضِلُّونَ بِأَهْوَائِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُعْتَدِينَ

"Why should you not eat of that over which Allah's name has been mentioned, when He has already given you explicit knowledge of those things which He has forbidden for you except in a case of extreme helplessness? And surely many people lead others astray by following their own desires without any knowledge. Indeed your Lord best knows the transgressors." (6:119)

In this verse Allah ﷻ has once again made it very clear that those who eat the meat of animals not slaughtered in the name of Allah ﷻ are ignorant and blindly following their own desires.

3. وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا مِمَّا لَمْ يُذْكَرِ اسْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَإِنَّهُ لَفِسْقٌ

"And do not eat the flesh of the animal over which Allah's name has not been mentioned at the time of slaughter; this is indeed sinful." (6:121)

In this verse, once again it is explicitly stated that the animal, which has not been slaughtered in the name of Allah ﷻ is forbidden for eating and to do so is a great sin. In the same verse, it is further stated:

وَإِنَّ الشَّيَاطِينَ لَيُوحُونَ إِلَىٰ أَوْلِيَآئِهِمْ لِيُجَادِلُوكُمْ وَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُوهُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَمُشْرِكُونَ

"And certainly Satans do inspire their friends to dispute with you (on this issue), But (Allah warns you that) if you obey and follow them (in making such meat Halal), you would indeed be among the Mushriks (those who associate partners with Allah)."

Allah ﷻ has warned us that Satans will inspire their friends in fabricating arguments and excuses to make halal what Allah ﷻ has made haram for us. Obviously, these friends of Satan are those who follow their own desires without knowledge. Allah ﷻ warns you that if you follow them, you will become of the Mushriks because you obeyed them in the matter of halal and haram rather than obeying Allah's ﷻ clear command.

4. لِيَشْهَدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَاتٍ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُم مِّنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطِعُوا الْبَائِسَ الْفَقِيرَ

"That they may witness the benefits made available for them, and mention the name of Allah on the appointed days over the cattle He has provided them". (22:28)

In this verse where Allah ﷻ has ordered us to sacrifice the animal, He has once again reminded us not to forget to mention the name of Allah ﷻ when sacrificing the animal.

5. وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا لِّيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُم مِّنْ بَهِيمَةِ الْأَنْعَامِ فَإِلَهُكُمْ إِلَهُ وَاحِدٌ فَلَهُ أَسْلِمُوا وَبَشِّرِ الْمُخْبِتِينَ

"And for every nation, We have prescribed a way of sacrifice so that they should pronounce the name of Allah, over the cattle, which He has provided for them". (22:34)

In this verse, Allah ﷻ has informed us of a very important fact which is that He also made it compulsory for the previous Ummah to recite His name when slaughtering the animal. Therefore, it follows that it is also compulsory for the Jews and the Christians to recite the name of Allah ﷻ when they slaughter an animal for consumption. This is why we have been allowed to eat the meat of an animal slaughtered by the people of Divine Books. This issue is discussed in more detail in the next section.

6. وَالْبَدَنَ جَعَلْنَاهَا لَكُمْ مِّنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ فَاذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا صَوَافٍ فَإِذَا وَجَبَتْ جُنُوبُهَا فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطِعُوا الْقَانِعَ وَالْمُعْتَرَّ كَذَلِكَ سَخَّرْنَاهَا لَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

“And We have included the camels (dedicated for sacrifice) among the Symbols of Allah, for there is much good for you in them. Therefore, mention the name of Allah over them when they are drawn up in lines (for sacrifice).” (22:36)

Again in this verse, Allah ﷻ expressed the need of reciting His name when animals are slaughtered for sacrifice. Ordinarily a butcher slaughters animals for consumption but during the Hajj season, everyone has to slaughter his own animal. This is why Allah ﷻ is emphasising and reminding us not to forget to recite His name at the time of slaughter:

7. يَسْأَلُونَكَ مَاذَا أُحِلَّ لَهُمْ قُلْ أُحِلَّ لَكُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَمَا عَلَّمْتُم مِّنَ الْجَوَارِحِ مُكَلِّبِينَ تُعَلِّمُونَهُنَّ مِمَّا عَلَّمَكُمُ اللَّهُ فَكُلُوا مِمَّا أَمْسَكْنَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سَرِيعُ الْحِسَابِ

"They ask you what has been made lawful for them. Say, all the good and pure things have been made lawful for you. You may also eat of what the hunting animals, which you have trained to hunt in accordance with the knowledge Allah has given you, catch and hold for you. You should, however, mention Allah's name over it and fear (to violate the Law of) Allah, for Allah is swift at reckoning." (5:4)

This verse deals with hunting for meat. Allah ﷻ has commanded us to recite His name before letting the hunting animals loose (e.g., dogs, hawks, etc.) after the prey. Only then the hunted animal will be halal; otherwise, it will be haram. This is the only right way to make sure the hunt is halal. This law of hunting has been mentioned very clearly in many Ahadith as well. I will present the following two Ahadith as examples:

1. The Prophet ﷺ said, if you (recited the name of Allah and) released one hound after the prey and another hound joins him and the two dogs hunt the prey together, then the hunt will not be halal because it is possible that the animal may have been killed by the dog on which Allah's name was not recited. (*Sahih Bukhari*)
2. If an animal is hunted with an arrow and the prey falls in the water after getting hit then the animal will not be halal because it is possible that his death may have been caused by the fall or by drowning. (*Sahih Bukhari*)

There are numerous Ahadith on this subject in the authentic books such as Bukhari, Muslim, Abu-Daud, Tirmizi, Nasai, Ibn-Majah, etc. All of these Ahadith emphasize that an animal killed without reciting the name of Allah ﷻ, at the time of slaughter, is haram.

Therefore, reciting the name of Allah ﷻ at the time of slaughter is the first condition for the meat to be halal. Now, whoever tries to prove otherwise is ignorant and is following his own whims and desires thereby misleading himself and others.

The second condition is that the animal should be slaughtered by cutting the throat, as it has been made clear in the following two Ahadith:

1. Abu-Hurairah رضي الله عنه narrated that the Beloved Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم once sent Budail bin Waraqah رضي الله عنه to Mina to announce and inform the pilgrims to slaughter their animals at the neck. (*Dar Qutni, p. 544*).
2. Abdullah bin Abbas رضي الله عنه, Umar رضي الله عنه and Ali رضي الله عنه have all narrated that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم instructed them to slaughter the animal at the neck. (*Bukhari*)

How and where should the neck be cut has been explained as well. Consider this Hadith:

Rafi bin Khudaij رضي الله عنه narrated that I asked the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم about slaughtering the animal; he replied that slaughtering the animal with any sharp object (with the exception of nail and teeth) makes it halal. (*Ibn Abi Shaibah, Zaila'i*)

The word “اوداج” (Awdaaj) in this Hadith means the two blood vessels, the oesophagus and the windpipe. Out of these four, at least three must be cut for the animal to be halal for consumption.

CHAPTER 3

Now, in regards to the animals slaughtered by People of the Book, namely, the Jews and Christians, we find the following verse in the Holy Quran:

الْيَوْمَ أُحِلَّ لَكُمْ الطَّيِّبَاتُ وَطَعَامُ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ حِلٌّ لَكُمْ وَطَعَامُكُمْ حِلٌّ لَهُمْ

"This day, We have made lawful (halal) for you all the clean and pure things, and We have also made lawful (halal) the food of the people of Scripture for you and your food for them." (5:5)

According to this verse, we are allowed to eat the food of the people of the Book. But does this mean that we are allowed to eat the meat of animals slaughtered by the Jews and Christians even if they do not follow the requirements of slaughtering prescribed by Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم (i.e., reciting the name of Allah and cutting the animal's throat as prescribed)? Absolutely not. Interpreting the meaning of the verse in this manner will amount to abolishing all the requirements of Islamic slaughter and discarding all the verses in the Holy Quran along with literally hundreds of Ahadith, without any proof to the contrary.

Under no circumstances are we allowed to discard and disregard any command of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم in the Holy Quran and the Ahadith of Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم without any solid proof to the contrary. In this case, if we assume that the above mentioned conditions for slaughtering animals are meant only for Muslims and not for Christians and Jews, then it means that no matter how they kill the animal,

it will be halal for us and for them. But if a Muslim slaughters an animal without meeting these requirements, the meat would be haram for our consumption. Does that make sense? Moreover, it implies that Allah ﷻ is much more lenient with the Jews and Christians in this regard than He is with the Muslims. This obviously does not seem right.

In fact, this is not the meaning of this verse. In order to understand the real meaning of this verse, we must first answer two questions. The correct answers to the following two questions will help us understand the true meaning of this verse.

First, What is meant by the word "طعام" (Ta'aam)?

Second, why did Allah ﷻ make halal for us the food of only the Jews and the Christians and not of the others?

Let us look at the first question. The Arabic word "طعام" (Ta'aam) means "food" or "meal." Now if we take this literal meaning of the word, then, according to this verse, pork and wine will become halal as well because both of these foods are regularly consumed by the Christians. Obviously, no Muslim will ever agree to this interpretation of the verse because we know that both pork and wine have been clearly declared as haram for us by Allah ﷻ.

Therefore, it follows that the word "Ta'aam" here does not mean all types of food. In the interpretation of this verse, Imam Qurtubi Rahimahullah has explained, "all those foods consumed by the Christians and the Jews which are forbidden for Muslims do not become halal because of this verse" (Tafsir Al-Qurtubi, v.6, p.77).

There is a consensus among the scholars of the Holy Qur'an, since the time of the Prophet ﷺ, that the word "Ta'aam" here means the meat of halal animals slaughtered by Christians or Jews. Ibn-Kathir, Imam Jassas, Imam Aalusi Rahimahumullah Ajma'een and others have derived this interpretation from the narrations by Abdullah bin Abbas (RA), Abu-Darda (RA), Abu-Umamah (RA), Mujahid (RA), Qatadah (RA), Saeed-bin-Jubair (RA), Ikrimah (RA), Ata' (RA), Hasan Bisri (RA), Makhol Shami (RA), Dhahhak (RA), Ibrahim Nakhai (RA), Imam Suddi (RA), and Imam Muqatil (RA), etc.

With this in mind, why was the slaughtered meat of only the Jews and the Christians made halal for us and not of the others? The answer is quite obvious. The Jews and the Christians used to slaughter their animals in exactly the same way as prescribed in Islam. They recited the name of Allah ﷻ at the time of slaughter and cut the animal at the neck. Thus, their method of slaughter was exactly like ours. Allah ﷻ had prescribed for them the same method of slaughter as has been mentioned in Surah Hajj, verse 34.

This can be confirmed through the Bible, Torah and the well established Jewish Dietary Laws. Consider the following quotations which have all been taken from "Kashrut: Jewish Dietary Laws" which can be found on many public internet sites.

1. "You shall kill of your herd and your flock as I have commanded you" (Deuteronomy 12.21).
2. The mammals and birds that may be eaten must be slaughtered in accordance with the Jewish law (Deut. 12:21). We may not eat animals that died of natural causes (Deut. 14:21) or that were killed by other animals. In addition, the animal must have no disease or flaws in the organs at the time of slaughter. These restrictions do not apply to fish; only to the flocks and herds (Num. 11:22).
3. Ritual slaughter is known as shechitah and the person who performs the slaughter is called a shochet, both from the Hebrew root Shin-Chet-Tav meaning to destroy or kill. The method of slaughter is a quick, deep stroke across the throat with a perfectly sharp blade with no nicks or unevenness. This method is painless, causes unconsciousness within two seconds and is widely recognized as the most humane method of slaughter possible. Another advantage of shechitah is that it ensures rapid, complete draining of the blood which is also necessary to render the meat kosher. The shochet is not simply a butcher; he must be a pious man, well-trained in Jewish law particularly as it relates to kashrut. In smaller, more remote communities, the rabbi and the shochet were often the same person.

The humane laws of shechita probably go back to biblical times. The Torah itself implies knowledge of it: "You shall kill of your herd and your flock as I have commanded you" (Deuteronomy 12.21). And the moral basis of shechita was explained 800 years ago by Maimonides in his *Guide of the Perplexed*: "...the Law enjoins that the death of the animal should be the easiest. It is not allowed to torment the animal by cutting the throat in a clumsy manner, by poleaxing, or by cutting off a limb while the animal is alive. It is also prohibited to kill an animal with its young on the same day (Leviticus 22.08), in order that people should be restrained from killing the two together in such a manner that the young is slain in the sight of the mother..."

5. In our time, the ethics of shechita were summarized by the noted conservative rabbi Samuel Dresner in the excellent booklet, "The Jewish Dietary Laws." He quotes, "The laws of shechita provide the most humane method of slaughtering animals. Great care is exercised that the knife to be used must be regularly examined before and after it is used to determine that it is perfectly smooth, without a notch that might tear the flesh. The cut severs the arteries to the head of the animal, thereby stopping circulation to the head and rendering the animal unconscious of all pain. This is not true when the animal is only stunned by a blow."

It should now be clear why the slaughtered meat of the Jews and the Christians was made halal for us. If a Jew or a Christian or even a Muslim slaughters an animal without properly following the prescribed requirements, the meat will not be halal for us.

There are numerous people in the present day that claim to be Jews and Christians, but their beliefs are not exactly in accordance with their original faith. Can they be included in the definition of the People of the Book? Similarly, there are people who claim to be Muslims but refuse to accept the basic tenants of Islam. Can they be considered Muslims? Certainly not. Furthermore, there are many

people who label themselves Christians or Jews yet do not even believe in God and in essence are actually atheists.

In summary, the first condition for their meat to be halal for us is that they should be People of the Book (Jews or Christians). Secondly, they must slaughter according to their religious requirements (which are not different from Islam).

Generally, Jews and Christians do not slaughter their animals according to their religion with the exception of orthodox Jews who eat kosher meat; because they know that what is available in the market is not permissible for them to eat.

How unfortunate it is that there are Jews who still follow the commands of Allah ﷻ whereas the Muslims are looking for all kinds of excuses to violate them. May Allah ﷻ give us guidance.

It should also be remembered that all the butchers in the slaughterhouses might not necessarily be Jews and Christians; they could be people from other faiths as well.

Some people present the Fataawa (religious verdicts) of Islamic scholars from Saudi Arabia as proof that we can eat the meat of an animal slaughtered by Christians and Jews. But this is merely another ploy to misguide the lay Muslims because the fataawa of Saudi scholars deal with the packed meat they import from outside on which it is very clearly written that it has been slaughtered in accordance with the Islamic principles. The Saudi Government has proclaimed a law that no haram meat will be imported and Saudi scholars keep this rule in mind when they render a Fatwa. Their fataawa do not apply to the meat we get in the North American grocery stores and slaughterhouses.

It is common knowledge that the meat sold in the grocery stores in North America and other western countries is not necessarily slaughtered by the Jews or the Christians, nor is it slaughtered in accordance with even their religious requirements. It is, therefore, clearly not halal for our consumption.

By now, all doubts in our minds about which meat is permissible (halal) and which is forbidden (haram) should have been lifted. I pray to Allah ﷻ for His protection from Satan and his human friends who are leading us astray from His straight path.