

Ruling on Eating Sea Creatures Other Than Fish

Darulifta Ahlesunnat (Dawateislami)

Question

Can we eat sea animals other than fish?

Questioner: (Qasim Bin Hassan, Kenya) (Mazhab: Hanafi)

Answer

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْجَوَابُ بِعَوْنِ الْمَلِكِ الْوَهَّابِ اللَّهُمَّ هِدَايَةَ الْحَقِّ وَالصَّوَابِ

According to the Hanafi school, all forms of fish are halal, except the fish that die naturally in the water without any apparent cause and float upside down to the surface; such fish are considered haram. As for all other sea creatures besides fish, they are Haram.

Allah Almighty states in the Noble Qur'an:

﴿وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبِيثَ﴾

Translation (Kanz-Ul-Irfan): and He prohibits foul things for them. (Part 9, Surah al-A'raaf, Verse 157)

Commenting on this verse, it is stated in al-Tafsiraat al-Ahmadiyah:

وفيه دليل على حرمة ماسوى السمك من حيوان البحر لان كلها خبيث

Translation: This is proof that all aquatic creatures other than fish are haram because they are all considered foul. (Al-Tafsiraat al-Ahmadiyah, pg. 421, Publ. Al-Matba'ah al-Kareemiyah, Mumbai)

The jurists of the Hanafi school have proven the impermissibility of all other sea animals through this verse. Thus, it is stated in al-Lubab Fi- Sharh al-Kitab:

(ولا يؤكل من حيوان الماء إلا السمك) لقوله تعالى { ويحرم عليهم الخبائث } وماسوى السمك خبيث

Translation: No aquatic creature other than fish can be eaten, because of the saying of Allah Almighty: "and He prohibits foul things for them." Other than fish, all aquatic creatures are foul. (Al-Lubab Fi-Sharh al-Kitab, vol. 2, pg. 367, Publ. Dar al-Irshad, Istanbul)

Further elaborating on which types of fish are halal, and which are haram, it is stated in al-Fatawa al-Hindiyah:

فجميع ما في البحر من الحيوان يحرم أكله إلا السمك خاصة فإنه يحل أكله إلا ما طفامنه

Translation: All the animals that live in the sea are Haram to consume, except for fish, as it is Halal to consume them, except for the one that died itself and floated upside-down. (Al-Fatawa al-Hindiyah, vol. 5, pg. 289, Publ. Egypt)

Similarly, it is stated in Bahar-e-Sharī'at:

پانی کے جانوروں میں صرف مچھلی حلال ہے۔ جو مچھلی پانی میں مر کر تیر گئی یعنی جو بغیر مارے اپنے آپ مر کر پانی کی سطح پر الٹ گئی، وہ حرام ہے۔

Translation: Fish is the only halal sea creature. The fish that died and floated in the water, i.e., died itself and floated upside-down on the surface of the water, is haram.

(Bahar-e-Sharī'at, Vol. 3, Sect. 15, p. 324, Publ. Maktaba-Tul-Madinah, Karachi)

وَاللَّهُ أَغْلَمُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَرَسُولُهُ أَغْلَمُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

(Allah Almighty knows best and His Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ knows best.)

Answered By: Mufti Muhammad Qasim Attari

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Dar-ul-Ifta Ahlesunnat (Dawat-e-Islami)



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