



The food we eat

or the way we eat

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ Bismillaahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem, "In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful." All Praise is due to Allah, we praise Him, seek His aid and His forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evils of our souls and the evils of our actions. Whomsoever Allah guides there is none to misguide and whomsoever Allah misguides there is none to guide. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except Allah, alone, without any partners and I bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.

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This paper is put together to provide some insights into the issue of food that is good for us as humans and the way we eat it. This is the first article as an introduction. I will write about milk, honey, garlic, onions, pumpkins, cheese, eggs, water, dates, vinegar, olive oil, barley, meat and so more.

As a Muslim, I was always interested in what food is halal [1] and do we have recommendation what and how to eat in the Sunnah [2] of the Prophet Mohammed (صلى الله عليه وسلم) [3]?

I studied the Jewish kashrut laws [4] or dietary laws given to Musa (Moses; عليه السلام) [6] and saw remarkable similitudes. The way we slaughter animals is quite similar. And as the Jews are we are restricted in what kind of animals we may eat, even the list of restricted animals is smaller in Islam.

By doing some research I found out that the Vedic or Ayurvedic (Hindu) diet is also similar to the way Muslims view some foods, although not for the same religious reasons.



Don't forget that your food is medicine. If you take the wrong food you will become sick by it.

Some information about the recommendations of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)

As Muslims it is sunnah for us to incorporate the eating habits of the Prophet (ﷺ) into our daily lives, for some this is a complete lifestyle change but our reward may be increased by simply trying to have a more balanced diet.

The Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) was a Flexitarian he prohibited eating meat every day. Islam does not ban the consumption of meat, but the Prophet (ﷺ) said it was “food of the Kings”, which implies meat consumption should be treated as a luxury and not daily as part of a dish. Also Islam does not require you to eat meat. Aabi al-Lahm's real name was Abdullah bin Abdul Malik, but was more commonly known as Aabi al-Lahm because he didn't eat meat and this was ok for the Prophet (PBUH). He was a poet and one of the elders of the Sahaba. He lived in al-Safraa', three miles from Medina. But you should not give up meat as part of ibadah [worship] nor is it a requirement to eat meat to become a Muslim.

How many meals should we have? Sahel was asked what you say about a man who eats once a day. He said: “That is the way the Prophet (ﷺ) did. And he asked about twice a day. He said: “That is the way of the righteous eats.” And then he asked for the ones who eat try times a day. He said: “Build for them a trough.” The Qur'an states we should eat and drink well but not be excessive. The Prophet ate with the stomach In 3rd's, he did not gauge until feeling ill, it is sunnah to eat within the portion. [7]

The latest preventative medical research is now suggesting that the best way to control our food intake is by restricting portion sizes and that the best way to do that is by replacing large bowls and plates with smaller versions. This results in less food being eaten over time. This is what the Prophet (ﷺ) did naturally all those years ago.

What is also fascinating to note here is, despite the Prophet (ﷺ) living in a time where food was scarce and the received habit was “eat as much as you can when you get it”, he still insisted on eating in a controlled way. This shows the great importance of having this control over our



portions and eating habits.

Gluttony is a form of personal sabotage, leading to a large number of health risks. Overeating may be seen by many as a simple act of self-indulgence in the presence of delicious food, but Allah obviously doesn't see it that way. It is easy to understand that unwholesome consumption, like taking drugs, clearly carries dangerous health risks. But the 1,400-year-old lesson here is that even the good, wholesome foods carry dangerous risks when eaten excessively. Obesity and diabetes, among other life-wasting

Allah says in the Qur'an: "Eat of the wholesome things We have provided for your sustenance, but *commit no excess therein*, lest My condemnation fall upon you; he upon whom My condemnation falls has indeed thrown himself into utter ruin." (20:81)

Ibn 'Umar reported that a man belched in the presence of the Prophet (ﷺ), who said to him: "Be away from us. On the Day of Judgment, those who will suffer from hunger for the longest time will be the ones who fill their stomachs in this life." (al-Tirmidhi)

"Eat and drink but do not be excessive for Allah does not love those who are excessive (in what they do)" (Quran 7:31) The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "The son of Adam does not fill any vessel worse than his stomach. It is sufficient for the son of Adam to eat a few mouthfuls, to keep him going. If he must do that (fill his stomach), then let him fill one third with food, one third with drink and one third with air." Narrated by al-Tirmidhi (2380); classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in al-Silsilah al-Saheehah (2265).

Ibn Abi Dunya reports that the Prophet saw a man with a big belly and told him: "That which you fed this belly of yours would have done you more good in the belly of a poor person." (at-Tabarani)

There were warnings relating to excessive consumption of meat in the Hadith and Muwatta of Malik:

The muwatta of Malik, Yahya ibn Said that Umar ibn al-Khattab (عنه الله رضي) [5] said, "Beware of meat. It has addictiveness like the addictiveness of wine." (Imam Malik's Muwatta chapter 49,



hadith 36 narrated by Yahya bin Saïd)

The human race is becoming addicted to cheap and poor quality meat, it has been ingrained in our daily lives to eat meat. People are becoming more and more unhealthy, diseases are increasing such as diabetes or cancers because of the increased consumption of meat and processed foods. This is down to farming practices changing to mass production to keep up with the greed and addiction of the consumer. It is part of Islam to eat fresh, homegrown, clean food. Food which is Tayyib. (Wholesome, pure, clean, nutritious)

“Oh, you people, eat from the earth what is halal and tayyib, and follow not the footsteps of the Shaytan ...” (Surat al-Baqarah 2:168)

“The Prophet halted to consummate his wedding with Safiyya. He invited the Muslims to his wedding banquet. He ordered that leather dining sheets be spread. Then dates, dried yoghurt and butter were put on those sheets. Anas added: The Prophet consummated his marriage with Safiyya (during a journey) whereupon Hais (sweet dish) was served on a leather dining sheet.” (Narrated Anas - Bukhari)

A wedding banquet usually a lavish, rich, opulent, and incredibly unhealthy meal. It does not conjure up images of dried yoghurt, dates, butter, and Hais. This looks more on a shepherds meal in the Himalaya. You can imagine the complaints if that was served at a wedding!

And yet the Prophet (ﷺ), a religious and political leader, found it perfectly acceptable to serve this to his guests.

Islam does not accept **food wastage** at any time. ... “It is not acceptable in Islam to waste food as Allah forbade Muslims to do so.” Reciting verses from the Qur'an,: It is He Who has brought into being gardens, the cultivated and the wild, and date-palms, and fields with produce of all kinds, and olives and pomegranates, similar (in kind) and variegated. Eat of their fruit in season, but give (the poor) their due on harvest day. And do not waste, for Allah does not love the wasteful. [Quran 6:141]

From this verse we comprehend that food is a primary source of waste. Leftover food in the days before refrigeration was probably a perilous invitation for predators to come visiting. However,



not only does Allah command us not to waste, but in the same verse He also teaches how to avoid it. Allah instructs us to share our food with the poor — not from leftovers after it's been to the market, but on the same day it is harvested.

This verse also identifies waste that occurs with consumption of food outside of its natural season. "Eat of their fruit in season" implies that this is better for us than, for example, importing grapes from halfway around the world. It is possible that this one simple command might have spared us all from global warming had we simply followed the guidance from Islam. Just think of all the fossil fuel emissions we might have avoided from only eating what is in season locally.

Waste is also a problem resulting from having too much.

The Qur'an say: "O you who believe! Do not make unlawful the wholesome things which Allah has made lawful for you, but commit no excess for Allah does not love those given to excess." [Quran 5:87]

Excess produce is a problem every farmer tries to cope with in a variety of ways. In the case of small family farms, neighborly sharing always was, and still is, a regular practice. In Islam, Allah requires that Muslims share a portion of every harvest with the poor in our neighborhoods. But, sadly, industrialized commercial farming practices have led to the worst forms of food waste due to excess.

The Prophet (ﷺ) found a date in the road and said "Were it not that I am afraid that it came from the zakaah, I would have eaten it." Narrated by al-Bukhaari in his Saheeh. And he ordered the one who eats to lick his fingers before washing them or wiping them on a handkerchief, and he instructed that if a piece of food is dropped, it should be picked up and any dirt should be removed from it, and it should be eaten. This indicates that it is not permissible to throw any kind of food, dates or other eatables in dirty or impure places; rather the blessing should be respected and preserved, because that is part of gratitude for it, and because this blessing may come to one who needs it and will eat it, even animals. So throwing it in the garbage is not permissible.



“Keeping up with the Jones’s,” or conspicuous spending for the sake of prestige, is not an evil born of 20th century, Western society. It is clearly present in the earliest days of Islam, in the Saudi Arabian desert society of 600 A.D., as we see in the following verses of the Holy Quran: “Children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer and eat and drink. But do not be excessive – verily Allah does not love the wasteful.” [Quran 7:31]

It is easier to count our blessings when we focus more on the poor people around us, rather than the rich. When God is our mentor, our peers become less impressive. And when we read all this down-to-earth guidance about avoiding waste, it becomes clear that the answers in Islam are simple. They are personal and self-evident. (See the advice of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) “When you see one who has more, look to one who has less.”

There is a lot more to say about food in Islam, here I give you a introduction. More articles will follow about specific food. In sha Allah (if Gods wil it).

And Allah knows best.

Footnotes:

1. **Halal:** (/hə'la:l/; Arabic: حلال ḥalāl), also spelled halaal is an Arabic word that translates to "permissible or lawful" into English. The term halal is particularly associated with Islamic dietary laws, and especially meat processed and prepared in accordance with those requirements.
2. **Sunnah:** (Arabic: سُنَّةٌ , sunnah, plural Arabic: سُنَنٌ sunan [sunan]), also sunna or sunnat, is the body of literature which discusses and prescribes the traditional customs and practices of the Islamic community, both social and legal,[1] often but not necessarily based on the verbally transmitted record of the teachings, deeds and sayings, silent permissions (or disapprovals) of the Islamic prophet Muhammad, as well as various reports about Muhammad's companions.
3. **صلى الله عليه وسلم** = Peace be upon him. It is a custom for Muslims to give honorific blessings each time they say or hear the name of the Prophet Muhammad to send blessing and peace upon him.
4. **Kashrut:** Kashrut (also kashruth or kashrus, כַּשְׁרוּת) is a set of dietary laws dealing with the



foods that Jews are permitted to eat and how those foods must be prepared according to Jewish law. Food that may be consumed is deemed kosher (/ˈkɒʃər/ in English, Yiddish: כּוֹשֶׁר), from the Ashkenazi pronunciation of the Hebrew term kashér (כֶּשֶׁר), meaning "fit" (in this context: "fit for consumption").

5. رضي الله عنه = May Allah be pleased with him, honorific blessing for the companions of the Prophet Muhammad.

6. عليه السلام = Peace be upon him, honorific blessing for the monotheistic prophets.

7. Quote from: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kvic-1_x6mI

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