



HALAL FOOD, ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

ABSTRACT

Differences in cultures are harmonized through understanding of each culture especially ones that are global in nature; Islamic Culture inclusive. In Islam everything is regulated by injunctions, even what to ingest as a food. So food consumption too is considered as part of lifestyle worthy of being regulated. Halal Foods literally refer to any consumables lawful for the Muslim nation. Any food outside the category is considered prohibited for this nation. In Islam rules are set aside for that purpose. Allah and His Messenger are the only authority capable of declaring a food halal or otherwise. Hence Qur'an and Sunnah (Prophetic traditions) are the reference points. Muslims are allowed to eat what is "good" (Qur'an Chapter 2: Verse168) - that is, what is pure, clean, wholesome, nourishing, and pleasing to the taste. In general, everything is allowed (halal) except that which has been specifically forbidden. Muslims are enjoined by their religion to abstain from eating certain foods. This is in the interest of health and cleanliness, and in obedience to God. In the Qur'an (2:173, 5:3, 5:90-91, 6:145, 16:115), the following foods and drinks are strictly prohibited by God: dead meat (i.e. carcass of an already-dead animal), blood, flesh of swine (pork), intoxicating drinks, meat of an animal that has been sacrificed to idols, meat of an animal that died from strangulation or blunt force, meat from which wild animals have already eaten. The paper is expected to introduce Islamic culture to the audience in terms of Halal Foods. It is expected to enhance understanding of Muslim world among other nations. Peace and understanding would be fostered. It would also highlight reasons on why Halal Food? Muslims do not consume certain foods just because they dislike those who prepare them but rather due to divine injunctions, thereby obeying their creator.



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INTRODUCTION

Since the time Almighty Allah created mankind, He gave him the ability to seek for his own livelihood and sustain himself so that he may multiply and spread his progeny across the world. He(mankind) works consistently in acquiring food which will enable him to live and permanence and retain same. This indicates an inseparable

relationship between man and food. This is confirmed by the story of our forefather and mother, Adam peace be upon Him and His wife. When they were pushed by instinct and lust for food towards forgetting the Command of Allah and falling into sin. Allah said in Qur'an: "And indeed We made a covenant with Adam before, but he forgot, and We found on his part no firm will-power". (Qur'an 20: 115).



That is why food security has become one of the fundamental basic needs of human life; hence, he mankind ventured into farming and other means in order to have incessant supply of food. To get continuance supply of food, human being invented advanced technological ways all in the name of food security. By the word food, I mean all that is consumable by mankind among animals, greens, fruits, etc.

Indeed Islam has urged muslim to exert effort in farming and demanded that a muslim must diligently be industrious in earning a living through lawful means.

What is Halal Food?

In Arabic, the word *halal* means permitted or lawful. Halal foods are foods that are allowed under Islamic dietary guidelines. According to these guidelines gathered from the Qu'ran and the Sunnah(Tradition of Prophet Muhammad Peace be Upon Him).

1. Islam and Nutrition

Significance of Food: need for growth, reproduction, cellular repair, respiration, movement, etc necessitates feeding because it is necessary the human body. Main Classes of foods needed by man include, Water, Carbohydrates, proteins, Fats, Vitamins and Minerals.

2. Islamic perspective on Foods and Nutritins

Prophet Muhammad peace be upon Him has said: "If a Muslim plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it, it is regarded as a charitable gift (sadaqah) for him." - Reported by Imam Muslim on the authority of Jabir Bin Abdullah. And the Prophet also said: "If the Hour (the day of Resurrection) comes and one of you is holding a palm shoot, let him take advantage of even one second before the Hour is established to plant it" Reported by Imam Ahmad from Anas bn Malik.

Allah said in the Qurán: "He it is Who has made the earth subservient to you (i.e. easy for you to walk, to live and to do agriculture on it); so walk in the path thereof and eat of His provision. And to Him will be the Resurrection" 67:15

Indeed Islam urges followers to benefit from what the God has created for His servants of lawful "O you who believe (in the Oneness of Allah - Islamic Monotheism)! Eat of the lawful things that We have provided you with, and be grateful to Allah, if it is indeed He Whom you worship". (Qurán 2: 172). Allah the Exalted has also said: "And eat of the things which

Allah has provided for you, lawful and good, and fear Allah in Whom you believe" (5:88).

3.Islamic Philosphy in Nutrition

Certainly, Islam has put a strong tie between the activities and the ultimate goal which is rendering sincere services to Allah Almighty. Allah Exalted Be He said in the Qurán: "Say (O Muhammad, peace be upn him): "Verily, my Salat (prayer), my sacrifice, my living, and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the 'Alamin (mankind, jinn and all that exists)"(Qurán6: 162).

Issue of feeding is like any other individual issue in humpan life. For the Muslim life as mentined abve, the ultimate goal is to attain piety. Body needs food as a source of energy to achieve that through engaging in virtues. Body needs the food to maintain and/or restore health to d the will f Allah and ultimately attain piety.

This is what is indicated by one of our pious predecessors, God be please with them: "certainly, I seek pleasure of Allah through my food and drink as I do to my sleep and superogatory prayers. It was this philosophy that made significant impact on the rational view of Muslim about food and rationalization of dealing with it. He considers it a mean not the ultimate goal to achieve fulfillment of the wishes and desires for himself, thus assuring himself to avert the ravages of extravagance and waste in search for food and eating it; thus, relieving himself of a lot of health problems .

A hadith of Prophet Muhammad peace be upon Him testifies this: "he is doomed, the slave of Dirhams; he is doomed, the slave of Dinar; and he is doomed the slave of Qatifa(a soft cloth); also doomed is he, the slave of Khabeesat(which is a type of food). He is doomed and deteriorated.....".

4. Provisions of food (foods and drinks) in Islam

Provisions of the slaughter and etiquette Islam put the legal provisions governing the slaughter of animals permissible to eat their meat, because of the significant impact of slaughtering process on the health and safety of the meat, and the resulting major impact on human health.

➤ It is in line with this that Shari'a set guidelines on how to slaughter. Namely, the slaughter of animals by cutting their throat or esophagus. This applies to every animal permissible to eat except fish and locusts . The importance of this is in facilitating

removing the blood from animal's body, where the blood within the body of animals carries many toxic substances such as nitrogenous compounds (urea, uric acid and ammonia) and carbon dioxide, in addition to that, it is also a carrier of some toxins from the intestines to the liver, whose consumption may lead to the detriment of human health and causing diseases to him .

➤ To mention the name of Allah purified and Exalted Be He while slaughtering an animal, because of the saying of Allah the Almighty: "So eat of that (meat) on which Allah's Name has been pronounced (while slaughtering the animal), if you are believers in His Ayat (proofs, evidence, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.)"(Qurán6: 188). "Eat not (O believers) of that (meat) on which Allah's Name has not been pronounced (at the time of the slaughtering of the animal), for sure it is Fisq (a sin and disobedience of Allah)...."(6:121).

➤ Tool to be used in animal slaughter must be sharp until the slaughtering process is quicker and easier, and thereby less suffering to animals during slaughter, and this is in tandem with the culture in the field of animal handling and welfare, non-tortured. Prophet Muhammad peace be upon Him said: "Verily, Allah has prescribed excellence in everything. So if you have to kill, then kill in the best manner. If you slaughter, then slaughter in the best manner. Let one of you sharpen his knife so his animal feels no pain. Narrated by Muslim from Shaddad ibn Aws. In urging the relief of the animal before slaughter there is solemn wisdom as exhibited by modern scientific studies. As the relief of the animal before slaughter is necessary to get the meat with a very delicious taste. Glycogen presence in the muscle after slaughter of animals is turned to lactic acid (acid milk), which plays role in preserving the meat, as well as working to soften the meat.

5. Forbidden Foods in Islam

One of the purposes of the Islamic Sharia is safeguarding religion and mind and soul and posterity and wealth. That is why Allah the Almighty outlawed everything that would impair the

achievement of these purposes. The rule governing the legitimacy to deal with the nature and components created by the Almighty which is Originally everything is lawful except that which is made unlawful by Shari'a. Almighty Allah said: "They ask you (O Muhammad, what is lawful for them (as food). Say: "Lawful unto you are At-Tayyibat [all kind of Halal (lawful-good) foods which Allah has made lawful (meat of slaughtered eatable animals, milk products, fats, vegetables and fruits)]. And those beasts and birds of prey which you have trained as hounds, training and teaching them (to catch) in the manner as directed to you by Allah; so eat of what they catch for you, but pronounce the Name of Allah over it, and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Swift in reckoning."(5: 4).

a. Alcohol

Alcohol is the substance resulting from the anaerobic fermentation of sugars sourced from some types of grains, fruits such as barley, dates, grapes and honey. Beer, as defined by caliph Omar ibn al-Khattab may Allah be pleased with him that: "What befogs mind

Holy Prophet peace be upon him was saying: "Every intoxicant is alcoholic drink and every intoxicant is haram" Narrated by Muslim, Ahmad and Tirmidhi and Nassa'i. He(peace be upon him) also said: "What intoxicates in large quantity so even few quantity of it too is haram(unlawful). " Narrated by Ahmad, Abu Dawood, Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah and Nassa'i .

Given the role of drinking alcohol in harming the mind and body and what it causes of repelling one from the path of God and prayer and bringing about enmity and hatred, that is why Islam stressed its unlawfulness and thicken the punishment of a muslim that consumed it. Allah said: "They ask you (O Muhammad concerning alcoholic drink and gambling. Say: "In them is a great sin, and (some) benefit for men, but the sin of them is greater than their benefit." And they ask you what they ought to spend. Say: "That which is beyond your needs." Thus Allah makes clear to you His Laws in order that you may give thought"(2: 219). And He also says: "Shaitan (Satan) wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants (alcoholic drinks) and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and from As-Salat (the prayer). So, will you not then abstain?. And obey Allah and the Messenger (Muhammad), and beware (of even coming near to drinking or gambling or Al-Ansab,

or Al-Azlam, etc.) and fear Allah. Then if you turn away, you should know that it is Our Messenger's duty to convey (the Message) in the clearest way" (Qurán 5: 91-92). So also Prophet peace be upon him stressed the prohibition and alienation from it all. Anas bin Malik may Allah be pleased with him narrated that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him cursed ten categories of people in connection with alcohol: "The one who produces it, the one for whom it is produced, the one who drinks it, the one who carries it, the one to whom it is carried, the one who pours it, the one who sells it, the one who earns from the sale of it, the one who buys it and the one for whom it is bought." Scientific research has confirmed that the intake of alcohol leads to many of the damage to human health, as it results in the production of chemicals that harm the brain, muscle, kidney, liver and heart. This is in addition to economic, social and aesthetic, as well as causing disease and malnutrition, many of them :

- i. Alcohol Reduces intake of other foods that contain nutrients beneficial to the body. Alcohol is a source that gives empty energy that gives human being conviction of fake satiety, so he shuns away from eating other foods .
- ii Alcohol causes inflammation of the stomach and intestines and pancreas, affecting the process of digestion and absorption and lead to poor absorption of nutrients such as minerals and vitamins, particularly vitamins B-complex water-soluble vitamin (c).
- iii. Alcohol and its aftermath in the liver leads to cirrhosis of the liver which leads to death. Hence alcohol leads to:
Vitamin deficiency diseases (B1) such as beriberi and congestive heart failure, and poor concentration, creativity and inflammation nervous alcohol .
Pellagra (pellagra), vitamin deficiency (B 3) (niacin).
Anemia resulting from vitamin A deficiency (c) and (B12 and folic acid).
Zinc deficiency diseases that leads to Short stature and delayed puberty and sexual maturity and growth retardation and poor sexual secretions and abortion when pregnant and the weakness of the body's immunity .
Vitamin deficiency diseases (A)

Alcohol increases the rate of excretion of some nutrients in the urine, especially the major mineral elements, zinc , magnesium

- IV. Alcoholic expose themselves to the reduction of body immunity against diseases .
- V. alcohol consumption increases chances for gout VI. 90% of stomach cancer and that most cases of cancer of the head (the base of the tongue, mouth, pharynx, esophagus and tonsils) have been diagnosed in individuals addicted to alcohol .
- VII. mental retardation and congenital anomalies in babies born to alcohol addicted mothers.
- VIII. alcohol contributes seriously to increase in respiratory diseases, particularly tuberculosis and acute respiratory infections.
- IX. that the cells of the digestive system is more vulnerable to the risk of alcohol, as it also affects the cells of the cerebral cortex responsible for thinking and will also lead to multiple inflammation of the peripheral nerves which causes paralysis of the upper limbs (hands and forearms) and lower extremities (feet and legs).

It is all of this that shows us clearly what it entails about the prohibition on alcohol in Islam. It also shows us the size of the suffering and tragedy of the human as a result of distancing oneself from the rule of God Almighty . A report of the World Health Organization, in November 1978, that "the problem of alcohol consumption in other parts of the world are so important . "The report pointed out that" the problems resulting from alcohol pose a significant obstacle in the way of social and economic development, adding it to consume all the potential health of those countries unless appropriate measures are taken ".

Forbidden animal foods in Islam

1. Dead(carcass)

It is that animal which is dead. Died through natural death, age, or illness or slaughtered without following the provision of Islamic law in slaughtering an animal.

2. Blood
3. Pork
4. What is slaughtered without mentioning Allah.
5. Strangled animal, the one killed by a violent blow, the one killed by a headlong fall, and the one killed by the goring of horns

6. that which has been (partly) eaten by a wild animal
7. Animal that eats filth

LAWFUL FOODS IN ISLAM

Some of the lawful enjoyable foods

Under this, it will become clear that whatsoever Allah has made halal to the Muslim Nation, there is/are benefit(s) associated with that. On the contrary, that which is unlawful for consumption by Muslim you find reasons for that as discussed above. Here are some of the Halal Foods:

1. Milk:-

Allah the Exalted said in the Qur'an: (And verily! In the cattle, there is a lesson for you. We give you to drink of that which is in their bellies, from between excretions and blood, pure milk; palatable to the drinkers).(Qur'an 16 verse 66). Ibn Abbas narrated that prophet Muhammad peace be upon Him has said: "he who God feeds should say, Oh God! Bless us in that which you have given us and provide us with that which is better. And he who God provides milk to, should say Oh God! Bless us in that which you have provided us with and give us more. For I know not that which is satisfying among foods and drinks but milk". Transmitted by Tirmidhiy, Abu Dawood and Ibn Majat. Sheikh Albani has confirmed its authenticity.

2. Honey:-

Allah Said in Qur'an: "And your Lord inspired the bees, saying: "Take you habitations in the mountains and in the trees and in what they erect. Then, eat of all fruits, and follow the ways of your Lord made easy (for you)." There comes forth from their bellies, a drink of varying colour wherein is healing for men. Verily, in this is indeed a sign for people who think"(16: 68-69). It was reported in Bukhari and Muslim from the narration of Abul Mutawakkil reported from Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri: that a man came to the prophet Muhammad peace be upon Him and told him of his brother who was complaining of stomachache. Prophet peace be upon Him said to the man, give him honey. He went and did that then came back made the same complain of no relief. Prophet said unto him again give honey to your brother. The man returned with the information of no benefit again. He was again asked by the Prophet peace be upon Him to administer honey still. And he said unto the man on the third or fourth incidence: God is right and the stomach of your brother is wrong".

3. Dates:-

Allah the Exalted said in the case of Mary, Mother of Jesus, peace be upon Him, at the time of His birth: "And the pains of childbirth drove her to the trunk of a date-palm. She said: "Would that I had died before this, and had been forgotten and out of sight!. Then [the babe 'Isa (Jesus) or Jibril (Gabriel)] cried unto her from below her, saying: "Grieve not: your Lord has provided a water stream under you. And shake the trunk of date-palm towards you, it will let fall fresh ripe-dates upon you. So eat and drink and be glad....."(Qur'an 19: 23-26). Imam Bukhari and Muslim reported in the book of medicine that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon Him has said: "Whoever eats date fruits of the high land "Medina Munawwarah" in the morning, no poison or sorcery shall hurt him that day".

4. Olive:-

Allah Almighty said: "With it He causes to grow for you the crops, the olives, the date-palms, the grapes, and every kind of fruit. Verily! In this is indeed an evident proof and a manifest sign for people who give thought"(Qur'an 16: 11). And Almighty Allah said swearing with olive: "By the fig, and the olive"(Qur'an 95 verse 1). At-tirmizi has reported in the book of victuals from the narration of Abu Huraira, may Allah be pleased with him who said: the Messenger of Allah peace be upon Him has said: "Eat the olive and anoint (yourselves) with it, for indeed it is from a blessed tree".

Scientific findings have shown that Olive oil contains monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids, as well as Vitamin E. It is consumed to promote coronary health and is used on the skin to increase softness and elasticity.

5. Fishes:-

Almighty Allah said: "Lawful to you is (the pursuit of) water-game and its use for food - for the benefit of yourselves and those who travel, but forbidden is (the pursuit of) land-game as long as you are in a state of Ihram (for Hajj or 'Umrah). And fear Allah to Whom you shall be gathered back" (Qur'an 5: 96).

CONCLUSION

Islam conveys the universal message-the principle on which the human life is organized. It encompasses a number of foundations and general principles that govern mankind. Out of the many principles, a few of them deal with man and his everlasting relation with food.

The role of Islam also extended to the establishment of a healthy diet system that ensures the safety and preservation of human health. This Healthy diet system is equipped to meet the everchanging needs of man and to secure him in terms of food which will sustain him and will quench his hunger.

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