

The Recommended Custom of Eating Food

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Abstract: *The religion of Islam has recommendations about eating food, that include starting of eating ,how to take mail , quality of food, and After meal, that are mentioned in this article.*

The holy Quran has paid a special attention to the daily behavior of human being.

In a chapter of Quran, there is a general recommendation:

“ The man should look at his food.” (The holy Quran, Abasa:24) ❁

There are interpretations for the above mentioned verse:

1-Man should know that God has favored this blessing to him. He may think about it that, where it has come from? Who has created it so good and perfect? And who has given the taste to it?

2-Whether this meal is a lawful (Halal) or prohibited daily food? Since Quran says that man should eat lawful and good foods. If the human being wants to be capable of the good and pure sustenance of Heaven, he should adopt himself with the same class in this world. Quran says:

“ The properties of the orphans which are possessed oppressively, will be the fire on the Final Day, and the oppressors will be punished soon.”

The Recommended Custom of Eating Food

1-Introduction of taking a meal:

A: Appetite and hunger

The meal should be taken upon hunger and appetite. Eating with a full stomach is terrible, and even animals do not do that.

Imam Sadeq (p.b.u.h) said:

“ There are three habits that God, the Great, hates them:

First is sleeping, when you are not tired.

The second is laughing without motivation, and the third is eating with a full stomach.”

B: washing hands before eating food:

Nowadays, though people use some tools for eating their food, still they use their hands and fingers, and for the sanitary reasons Islam advises washing hands before the meals.

C: Starting food by saying “ In the name of God” :

The messenger of God told to Imam Ali (p.b.u.h):

“O’ Ali start your food by saying “In the name of God”, and end it by thanking Him.”

Eating food in the name of God makes the body healthy, fresh, and powerful. Moreover, it gives a spiritual effect as well, and causes a devotional delight.

D: Eating salt before meal:

The God’s messenger(p.b.u.h) said to Imam Ali (p.b.u.h):

“ Start and finish your food with salt, since it secures your body from 70 diseases such as madness, leprosy, and vitiligo.”¹

2-How to take the meal

A: Taking the seat

Islam prohibits eating in a standing posture, or while walking around. It recommends to sit and eat the food. Imam Sadeq (p.b.u.h) said:

“ Try to do not walk when you eat, unless you are in an emergency.”

We have a lot of blessings in this world. One of them is the food we eat. It means when we put the meal on the food table, actually there are the divine blessings in front of us. From the other side, this blessing has a priority over others. The other graces are given through this one; your daily acts and religious deeds can be done only when you have strength. Therefore, the food table is important and scared, and deserves a

¹ - Makarem-ol-Akhlagh, Vol.1, P.269

special respect. Nobody sit on the table in a rude way, or behave impolitely.

B: Eating from the dish in front of you:

Imam Hassan (p.b.u.h) said:

“ Take the meal from the dish in front of you.”¹

It means where you sit at the food table, take the food from a dish in your front, and do not stretch hand to the other sides of the table, and other dishes.

C: Not to eat a hot food

The holy prophet (p.b.u.h) said:

*“ The Almighty God has not fed us the fire, truly the hot food does not have any grace, thus let it be unheated. ”*²

Puffing the hot food is not recommended also. It should become cool by itself. The holy messenger (p.b.u.h) said:

“ Puffing the hot food spoils the blessing of the meal. ” (Makarem-ol-Akhlagh, vol.1, P.276).

D: Eating little

Eating too much weakens the soul. The heart, which is the place for the inspiration, the spiritual life, and the joy of the prayers, will get spoiled by eating too much.

The holy messenger (p.b.u.h) said:

“ Do not make your soul stopped by excessive drinking and eating. Because the soul is like a farm that would be spoiled by over watering. ” (Makarem-ol-Akhlagh, Vol.1, P.283).

E: To chew the food well

Chewing the food makes the food mixing with the saliva and be digested better.

¹ - sonan-ol-Nabi, P.187

² - Sonan-ol-Nabi, P.176

3-After making the meal

A: Thanks giving and pray

There are various prays to be said after the meal

The messenger (p.b.u.h) said:

“ O’God, make me granted to your blessings.”

Imam Sajad (p.b.u.h) said also:

“ Thanks to God who favored us with food and water, gave us daily bread; and helped and sheltered us; bestowed and extended the blessings. Thanks to God who feeds His creatures, while He does not eat Himself.”

B: Eating salt after food

The salt after the meal sterilizes the mouth, stomach and the digestive system.

C: Washing and drying the hands

D: Cleaning the table:

In our religious texts it has been recommended to not leave any food at the table after the meal. If you take your meal at home, eat out all the leftovers of your food, and in the case you are out of house, leave them for the animals around.

E: Cleaning the teeth by tooth-pick

Using the tooth-pick differs from brushing the teeth (it cleans the teeth better).

It has been narrated from Vahab-Ibn-Abderabbbeh that:

“ I saw Imam sadeq (p.b.u.h) cleaning his teeth by tooth-pick. When he saw me, he said: “The holy messenger used to clean his teeth by tooth-pick. It makes your mouth good smelled.” (Sonan-ol-Nabi, P.168).

F: A short rest

It is good to sleep on your back after your meal, and put the right leg on the left one, and let your digest system work easier for a while.

Two beautiful narratives:

Imam Ali (p.b.u.h) said:

“ Prolong your sitting on the food table (of course not by nervous talking or eating more) because the time spent for taking the meal is not considered from your age.”

He also said:

“ Everybody who performs the following things, will not get sick till his death comes:

- 1-Eating food only when he is hungry and with an empty stomach.*
- 2-Chewing the food well in a way that he cannot keep it longer in him mouth.*
- 3-Stop eating while still has appetite.*
- 4-Going to the toilet when it is needed without delay.*