

Eat, Drink, and Be Muslim

A worldview approach to the subject of food and eating from an Islamic perspective taking into consideration the prevailing general outlook shared by most people in today's world. There is an urgent need for more education regarding our beliefs and practices surrounding food. Our future and the survival of our planet may well depend on it.

By Khadija Abd-Haleem



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The magazine contains some of Allah's names. Please do not show it to the street. Enter keep circulation, shed it to people.

Acts of the *Salah* and the Heart's States in them

BY IMAM ABU HAMID AL-GHAZALI (D. 505 AH)

When you hear the *Aathan*, let that remind you of the horrors of the Summons on the Day of Resurrection. Spare no time in fully preparing yourself to respond. For those who hasten to answer this call are the ones who will receive gentle summoning on the Day of the Great Review. So review your hearts now; if you find it elated and eager to respond, you can expect the Summons to bring you glad tidings on the Day of Judgment. That is why the Prophet used to address Bilal saying: "Delight us by the *salah*, O Bilal!"



WUDHU

When you perform ritual cleansing (*wudhu* or *ghusl*), make sure to also tend to the cleanliness of your inner being, which lies at the heart of all these. In cleaning your inner being use in the place of water repentance and remorse for your excesses, and a resolve not to perpetrate them in the

future. Thus you should cleanse your inner being, for that is the place where your Lord will be looking.

COVERING PRIVATE PARTS

When in *salah* you make sure that certain parts of your body are cov-

ered from the eyes of other humans. But you should also mind your internal shameful spots, those unworthy secrets of your soul that are beheld only by Allah. Beware these faults and realize that nothing will escape the sight of Allah.

FACING THE QIBLAH

In this you turn your face away from all other directions and set it toward the *Ka'bah*. But more important than that is to turn your heart away from everything else other than Allah, directing it towards Allah Almighty. This is the whole point of the practice!

STANDING UPRIGHT

This means holding oneself erect—in body and in spirit—in the presence of Allah. Your head which is the highest part of your body should be

THE FOUR FACETS OF FOOD IN THE QUR'AN

SUDDENLY, IT MAKES sense that sustenance and eating is addressed in the Qur'an and Sunnah so frequently, from so many different angles, and expounded so meticulously by the best Muslim scholars of every generation. The craving to eat arcs far beyond the need to survive. It characterizes the clay-fashioned nature of our creation and its constant quest for enjoyment and pleasure. In all its wondrous forms, food is described in the Qur'an by its Provider as one of the absolutely defining joys of the Garden of Paradise. Think about that.

Here is a delicious reward that beckons the listener alive to the Qur'an with the most compelling descriptions of food's unprecedented delight, its unadulterated beauty. Fiqh, *Islamic Law applied*, outlines extensively what we can eat. And, oh, for the Sunnah of our beloved Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam! For he illustrated exactly how we ought to do it. His is a living criterion of partaking, enshrining for all time eating's most civil and desirable etiquette, while edifying us with that lofty attitude of utter abstemiousness coupled with total generosity that so informed all the Prophet's associations with edibles.

I. PRAISING THE PROVIDER



The miracle and divine favor of food in creation is a study unto itself. And in truth, none can lay claim to having accounted for all its blessings. Volumes can be (and have been) written about it. My mother-in-law (and yes,

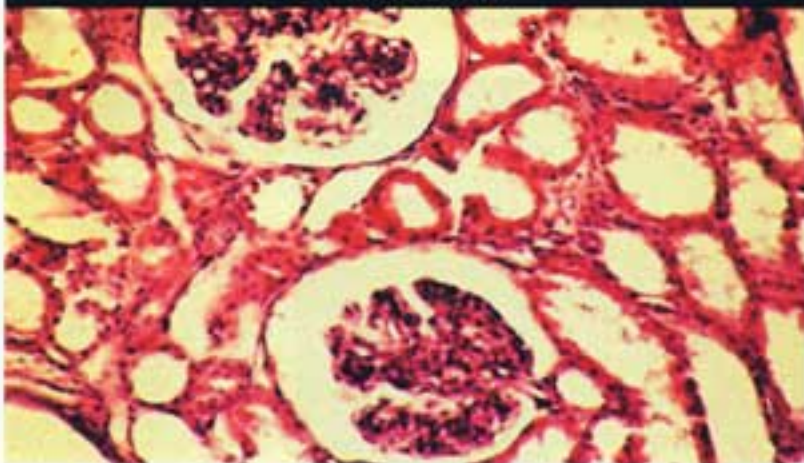
she does love me, whether or not I show up in Egypt precisely at mealtime) has a practice that makes all of us simultaneously laugh and feel the pang of humility. She insists at every meal to count the different types of food on the table. "Look, there are three different foods here: *Salata*, *ruzz*, and *Kana*." She brings it down to itemizing the salt on the salad, the oil that fried the onions, and the real tomato sauce that our sliced zucchinis now swim in succulently. After a long countdown of particles in, on, and around our food that would make a chemist envious, she never fails to say, granting us permission to partake: "*Allahaumma idemba-ha alayna min ni'mah wabfadh-ha minaz-zawaal* or May Allah perpetuate its blessing and safeguard it from cessation."

It is impossible to give enough thanks to the One who provides and provides without termination—especially in these times and, in particular, in this society, where food is almost as easily come by as water. Yet all praise is for Allah, much praise, wholesome and blessed, though our praising is insufficient.



CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE CELL-6

BY HARUN YAHYA



FOR EVENTS TO TAKE PLACE IN YOUR CELLS, KNOWLEDGE IS REQUIRED


Digested food that relocates from the stomach to the small intestine contains very strong acids—posing a serious danger to the duodenum, because unlike the stomach, the duodenum has no special lining to protect it from acid.

So how is it that the duodenum escapes damage from the acids in digested food? Answering this question obliges us to first examine the events that take place during digestion, and explore the amazing processes that occur in our bodies.

When the level of acid reaching the duodenum from the stomach becomes dangerously high, the walls of the duodenum release a hormone called secretin, which protects the duodenum and is found in the walls of the small intestine in an inactive form, called prosecretin. On contact with acid, prosecretin is converted into secretin.

Released into the bloodstream, secretin travels to the pancreas where it stimulates the release of enzymes. The pancreas, on learning by the presence of secretin that it is in trouble, sends to the duodenum bicarbonate ions that neutralize the acid and thereby protect the duodenum.

How did these processes, so vital to human life, come about? Located in



the pancreas is "knowledge" of the substance needed by the duodenum cells, and the formula to activate them. The way the pancreas "understands" the message sent by the duodenum, and its subsequent release of bicarbonate ions are all miraculous.

Here, in talking about the intestinal cells, we use terms like "knowledge" and "understanding" to emphasize the events that take place in the human body. However, as every conscious person can appreciate, it is impossible for a cell to think, to possess the will to make decisions, or to be aware of what is transpiring with other organs and produce enzymes and hormones in response.

The unique Possessor of knowledge, Who created these cells together with these capabilities, is God. With these features that He has created in our own bodies, He demonstrates to us His infinite power.

EXPOUNDING EVIDENCE OF GOD'S EXISTENCE CAN FREE PEOPLE FROM IRRELIGIOUS BELIEFS

According to the Darwinist claims, all living things result from spontaneous coincidences. But the thousands of complex systems in our bodies dismiss this theory of "coincidence" as nonsense. One example is the hair-like structures whose sole duty is to allow the cell to move and which, in turn, consist of thousands of minute details.

Some cells move by the use of short, microscopic structures, called cilia, that resemble eyelashes. For example, each of the stationary cells in the respiratory tract possesses hundreds of cilia. By moving together all at the

The Indisputable Event

*When the Indisputable Event [of the Last Hour] occurs,
no one then shall belie its occurrence!*

BY OMAR HALEEM

THESE TWO LINES are among the most unforgettable opening verses of any surah in the Quran. They belong, of course, to Surah of Al-Waqi'ah. The Arabic word 'waqi'ah' means 'event,' 'happening,' or 'occurrence.'

The revelation of this surah took that meaning, made it definite, and transformed it for all time into an explicit name for the end of time—and what a name it is! For it tells us that despite all our trepidation, doubts, or misgivings, this cataclysmic close to all life in the world and to the world we all live in is surely coming. By the definition of the word that names this surah, as well as according to its divine promise, ready or not, this event is "happening."

But an Arabic word is not all this surah alters. Anyone who measures out its meanings in the chant of a still night, his heart will change, and change utterly. "If one would know the fateful tidings of

the foremost and the least of humanity, of Heaven's inhabitants and the tenants of Hell, of this world's denizens and the dwellers of the Hereafter, let him read Surah of Al-Waqi'ah." So said Masruq, the famed savant of the Quran from the generation that succeeded that of the Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, thus known as the Successors.

Truly spoken are Masruq's words, summing up the surah brilliantly in its message, capturing also the indelible impression it left upon its Messenger, Muhammad, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, for it is known that he remained specially preoccupied with this surah for the duration of his mission.

A Bridge Between

In the sequence of the Quran's gradual revelation to the Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, Surah of Al-Waqi'ah (56) came after Surah of Ta Ha (20) and before Surah of Ash-Shu'araa (26). Both these surahs form a strong, nearly continuous exhortation to the Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, to two ends: (1) To persevere in delivering God's message, like the prophets who preceded him—and above all Moses, whose divine charge the Prophet's own mission would spectacularly fulfill and to whose commission his own was so closely linked; (2) These illustrations seek to uplift and spur on the spirit of the Prophet, sallallahu alayhe wa sallam, up from his acute distress and out of the profound sense of sorrow he felt for a deluded people, blindly implacable in their opposition to his call to no other end but Hellfire.

Yet just before its own close, Surah of Ta Ha turns from its attentive account of the life-struggle of Moses, first against Pharaoh, tyrant of the earth, and then against the recalcitrant among his delivered but soon-fallen people. Up and away it suddenly whisks us to the shattering event of the flattening of the earth and the ensuing resurrection. Swiftly it summons us to the pulverized plane of the Judgment Day, utterly leveled without curve or wave.

Surah of Ash-Shu'araa, in a brief verse after its opening, picks up this same theme: Forever separated in the next life are the believers from the believers by the

