

CHAPTER TWELVE

Consumption and science ¹

O Allah (The Exalted) bless our master Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) and grant him peace and reward him as much as he deserves, and he is Your Beloved.

Eating with the hands

A Muslim engineer states; that "I was in a meeting in Washington with three other managing directors of a company. When the meeting finished we were served food. I commenced to eat with my hands and watching this others put their cutlery down and started to eat with their hands as well. I was surprised to see westerners were tearing the meat with their teeth. I asked them why they were not using their knife and fork. They said, they preferred to eat with their hands. After we completed our meal I offered them a napkin to wipe their hands but they refused and actually licked their fingers, I asked were they had learnt this from? They said, 'In American research it states that the holes in the fingers create minute particles of copper which can be viewed with the aid of a microscope, these particles assists the digestion system that's why we did not use the cutlery.

Ka'ab bin Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates, "The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) ate with three fingers and before wiping his hands he licked them." ⁱ

Washing the hands before food

Before eating it is Sunnah to wash ones hands, if one does not do this then it is likely that they will pollute the food with bacteria. It is recommended not to wipe hands dry after washing because if they are dried with a towel, then it is likely that the bacteria in the towel will be picked up.

Once a truck driver whilst working decided to stop for some food, and stopped at the nearest hotel. But before going in he thought he would check the tyres of his vehicle. Having checked them he went inside and ate his food without washing his hands. Some people found out that the truck driver had died, soon after eating the food at the hotel. His death had nothing to do with the food served at the hotel but came about because while checking the tyres he got snake venom on his hands from the snake that he had ran over.

Tasting salt

Salt helps to develop the taste buds and increases saliva which assists digestion of food. This is the reason one gets satisfaction of the food because it taste delicious. After eating some greasiness is left in the food pipe which is not good for the health, a little salt clears this greasiness.

The Prophet said, "Salt is the master of your food. God sent down four blessings from the sky - fire, water, iron and salt." ⁱⁱ

UNICEF reports that the body needs only minute amounts of iodine (from iodized salt) to function properly. Yet, a lack of the nutrient causes various disorders, from stunted growth to cretinism², a most serious condition. Even mild deficiency produces mental impairment. Studies estimate that children living in iodine-deficient areas forfeit up to 10 to 15 IQ points.

Doctors often recommend replacing water and salt lost during exercise and when working outside in jobs such as agriculture. Increased salt intakes have been used successfully to combat Chronic Fatigue Syndrome as well. Dramatic deficiencies or "excessive" sodium intakes have been associated with other conditions and diseases such as stomach cancer. Testing the salinity of perspiration has proven to be a good test for cystic fibrosis³, (commonly known as the 'Seat test').

¹ See Volume One, Chapter Twenty Nine for this Sunnah

² A syndrome of dwarfism, mental retardation, and coarseness of the skin and facial features.

³ A hereditary disease affecting cells of the exocrine glands (including mucus-secreting glands, sweat glands and others).

The most talked-about effect of salt is the association of dietary sodium and elevated blood pressures (hypertension). The American Society published a good overview of recent scientific evidence as a supplement to The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition for Clinical Nutrition in February 1997, and the Medical Journal of Australia reviewed that debate earlier this year. They found that the kidneys efficiently process this “excess” sodium in healthy people. In fact, in cases of hypotension, genetic factors explain a quarter to a half of blood pressure variability – five times more than environmental factors such as stress, physical activity/exercise, smoking and, of course, diet. Among dietary risk factors, obesity is generally recognized as the most important followed by excess alcohol consumption and then salt intake.

In May 1998, Journal of the American Medical Association published a large meta-analysis confirming a 1996 study and documenting, as well, a series of adverse changes to blood chemistry among those placed on low-sodium diets in clinical trials. All told, there have been six clinical trials, five of which were limited to randomised controlled trials. These provide consistent evidence of only a minor blood pressure response to a restriction of dietary sodium. In Bazazaiya and Raddul Mohtar the Hanafi Fiqh manuals written over 1000 years ago it states; start and finish (food) with salt or something that contains salt, as it rids of seventy illnesses. It has to be noted that excessive salt is harmful to ones health. *Subhanallah!*

Washing the mouth before eating

Many germs enter the mouth through the air we breathe. To wash the mouth is hygienic and clears the germs and if not washed the germs enter the stomach creating illness in the stomach.

Using the right hand

By eating with the right hand you are placing treatment in the body as the left hand is used for cleansing the private parts. There is a chance some germs are left on the left hand and if eaten the germs will enter the stomach creating illness.

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates the Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) states, “Eat with the right hand and drink with the right hand and take with the right hand and give with the right hand. This is because the devil eats with the left hand and drinks with the left hand and gives with the left hand and takes with the left hand.” ⁱⁱⁱ

Not to blow on food

A person inspires air and exhales carbon dioxide, breathing out carry many germs and if blown in food the germs will go in the food. If in a gathering the food is blown into, the germs will spread to other people who are eating.

Eating in a gathering and to eat the left overs

There are numerous reports of people being cured by eating the left-overs of Muslims, in which there is a healing according to the Sunnah. “The people said, ‘O Prophet of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). We eat but do not become full,” The messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “You may be eating separately,” they said, “Yes,” the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, “Eat together and recite Bismillah there will be blessing.” ^{iv}

Section One

Method of eating

Sitting on the soles of the feet

To sit in this manner one only eats the amount of food needed as the thighs are pressed against the stomach. The benefit of this is that the less food that enters the stomach the less chance there is of illnesses.

Abu Karima al Miqdad ibn Madikakrib (may Allah be pleased with him) reports that he heard the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) say "No man fills a vessel which is worse than his stomach. Sufficient for the son of Adam (upon whom be peace) are a few mouthfuls to keep his back upright, but if it has to be more, then let one third (of the stomach) be for his food, one third for his drink and one third (be left) for his breathing." ^v

Sitting with the right knee erect

To sit in this manner additional food enters the stomach, however, one will be saved from illness of Spleen⁴, and the thigh muscles will strengthen.

Sitting both knees on the floor

In this position one eats more than sufficient and it is for those who work physically, who walk a lot, and who exercise. Those who work in offices or driving jobs may be affected by many illnesses. If sat in the first position mentioned then Insha-Allah one will not be affected by any illnesses. Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (may Allah be pleased with him) mentions the Sunnah position in Ihya-ul-Uloom in the chapter of eating.

Korea, eating and visitors

Hakeem Tarik says "In my travels to Korea I saw many people sitting the Sunnah way to the extent that even if sat on a chair they had been sitting the Sunnah way. I asked some people and they said, obesity is a big illness and a good way not to be affected by this is to sit in these positions. When I said to them, this has been thought by Islam many centuries ago, they were surprised and said, "Why did you not teach us this?"

Chewing the food

After looking at the tradition, Scholars have advised to chew the food. According to authentic research dentist say whosoever does not chew the food there is a good chance the teeth will decay, and if eaten on one side the other side's teeth will rot. Therefore one should eat on both sides and chew the food. By not chewing the food there is a possibility of stomach inflammation and acidity, hence, if we want our stomachs to be in good shape then we should revive this Sunnah of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

Cleaning the plate

After eating one should wipe the plate clean. The companions say that "the Prophet's (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) plate could be distinguished from others as his plate was cleansed the most." Science states that at the edge of the plate there is more vitamin B complex and other vitamins. Mineral salts can only be found at the edge of the plate, hence if one cleans all the plate one will benefit from all the vitamins from the plate.

It is mentioned in the Hadith that the plate and other vessels which are wiped and licked using fingers, pray for the person doing this and say; "May Allah (The Exalted) free you from the Hell fire the way you have freed me from the 'Devil.'" Another Version of the Hadith says, "The plates ask for forgiveness of the individual." ^{vi}

Not to lean

Research shows that leaning is disadvantageous to the digestive of food. The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said "I do not eat when reclining." ^{vii}

⁴ The spleen is a solid, dark purplish organ, situated high up on the left side of the abdomen, close to the outer wall and immediately under the diaphragm. It lies immediately under the lower ribs between the stomach and the left kidney. A large artery, arising from a branch of the aorta, runs along behind the stomach, to supply it with blood.

Food and science

Science emphasises the benefits of eating less. Over eating creates many illnesses which have been mentioned by Professor Richard, from Dewsbury. These include; diseases of the brain, eyes, E.N.T, chest and lungs, heart, liver and gall bladder, diabetes, high blood pressure, psychological diseases and depression. ^{viii}

Look at the few words of wisdom that the Prophet said regarding part the stomach into three parts which has been mentioned above. When a philosopher heard this he said, "I have not heard words as strong as these."

Talking whilst eating

To talk about unpleasant things whilst eating and even outside of eating is disliked in Islam. A famous European Doctor, Doctor Kafeen who is a radiologist said, "I have seen X-rays of peoples' stomach, liver and intestines. In the state of anger the mentioned parts of the body become weak and being happy the parts become strong. Those who eat whilst in the state of anger get Stomach Ulcer and T.B. of the intestines. The rule is that food be eaten when ones physical and mental state are at peace."

Home fly

Home fly may pass on an illness but can also provide medicine too. The Prophet Muhammad (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said "If a fly falls in your food then dip it (and throw away) as in one wing it has illness and in the other the cure and it saves itself from the wing that has the cure, ^{ix} meaning it falls on the wing that has the illness, hence, dip it all in.

The amount of cure in the fly is equal to the amount of the bacteria, therefore it is capable of eliminating it. It is scientifically proven that the fly secretes an enzyme called bacteria or germs killer. Dr. Amin Ridha, the professor of bones surgeon in medical college in Alexandria wrote about the Fly. He confirmed that the old medical references contained medical prescription for different diseases which advised to use Home fly as a medication. Surgeons have witnessed the medication of chronic bone breaks and chronic ulcers by the home fly which preceded the discovery of sulphate.

Wiping the hands on the face

In the tradition it states that wipe your hands and face. After eating, moisture exits of the finger tips which is beneficial to the body. It is good to wipe them on the parts of the body i.e. face and hands. In the skin there are glands called Sebaceous Glands which release moisture which is called Sebum. This is dried up when wudhu is performed, or a lot of water is placed or with the wind. According to the tradition if one places the hands after eating on the face, and hands it will bring this moisture back. To place this moisture on the face and parts of the body makes it look beautiful, to the extent that the whole body benefits from it i.e. the nerves and the muscles. It is beneficial for those who suffer from nerve pain, muscles ache and back ache.

Eating with the hands and licking the fingers

To lick the fingers after eating has benefits for the pancreas and for diabetics (as they do not suffer from a drop in insulin).

Washing the mouth

It was the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) to use a tooth stick. Today people use this in their homes and hotels etc. The food gets wedged in the teeth and if not taken out it causes septic and erodes the teeth and gums. If the food is not taken out by the means of washing the mouth there is a danger of gum infection. Scholars have made it permissible to eat food stuck in the mouth and if the food is taken out throw it away.

Washing the hands

Islam teaches us to wash the hands and wipe them after eating. It is clear from the Sunnah that if one does not wash their hands and they were bitten by an insect then it is their own responsibility, because after eating there will be food on our hands no matter how many times we wipe them with tissue and if things are touched with that hand then germs will spread onto them, hence Islam has given us this protection for our own benefit.

Sleeping after eating

To sleep straight after eating invites many illnesses. This is why the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) has prohibited us from doing so. When eating the stomach's digestive system starts working and if one sleeps on a full stomach the digestive system can not get a chance to do its work. Pathologist⁵ and physiologist⁶ have said "After eating body movement is essential. Suffering from gas and acidity of the stomach is caused when a person sleeps straight after eating and this is the reason why stomach problems are created". This has come to light now but it was told by the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) many centuries ago.

Covering the utensils

Not to cover utensils that have food or drink in it can be very harmful to health. In warm countries there is a chance of snakes or other reptiles leaving their venom in the utensils. Also one has to be vigilant and careful about insects that fly or fall into the utensil. If one has a cat it could get into the food and leave its saliva behind. There are many germs which are all around us which we can not see. It is up to us to take heed and protect our health by following the teachings of the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace).

Section Two

Drinking water

A Desert Incident

Hakeem Tarik writes in his book Sunnat-e-Nabawi aur Jadeed Science, that A person said, "We got lost in the Sahara desert, it was very warm and we were thirsty and no water was to be found. After some time we found a place where people were living, we asked for water so a person gave us some water in a bowl made from earth and placed some grass in it. We were surprised that he had placed some grass; being thirsty we wanted to drink the water but had to take small sips to avoid eating the grass. We drank the water and asked the person about the pieces of grass", he said, 'If I gave you the water plain then you would have drank it in one go and would have suffered. I have seen people die due to this.'"

If we drank water all at once there is a chance of the water being inhaled into the wind pipe and affecting the respiration system, however, if the water is sucked then the parts of food left in the teeth will be cleansed from what is wedged in between the teeth.

Narrated by Hadhrat Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (may Allah be bless him and grant him peace) said "Suck water when drinking as this is pleasing and digests easily and saves one from illnesses." ^x

Narrated by Hadhrat Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said that "The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) use to take three breaths when drinking water," and "Drinking like this is more satisfying and beneficial for health and very pleasing." ^{xi}

To look at the water

A man was travelling with an audit Inspector from the army and noticed he used a thin white cloth which he would cover his glass of water whenever he was thirsty. When questioned he told the man that he covered the glass so that if there was any insects in the water they would get caught under the cloth and not enter his mouth. In a Hospital in Multan, Pakistan, a young child had to be operated on, they found an insect with a shell, it is said it came from contaminated drinking water, the child later died.

If any drink is drunk sitting down then only the water that is needed will be drunk. If more than enough is drunk then there is a chance of an illness.

⁵ Is the application of the knowledge gained to the treatment of patients. Study of disease process with the aim of understanding their nature and causes.

⁶ The science of the functioning of living organisms and of their component parts.

To stand

The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) forbade drinking whilst standing, if drunk standing there are many illnesses of the stomach and liver. In a tradition it states; "The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) forbade drinking water standing."^{xii}

Take three sips

Many illnesses can affect a person if they do not drink in three breaths. Water may enter the decoupages (food pipe) as well as the lung which could lead to death. The major effect will be on the intellect as it has connections with the fluids in the brain. If water is drunk slowly it will not affect the brain. If water is consumed in a large amount it affects the stomach as well as the heart. If the water goes to the right it affects the liver and if on the left it affects the Spleen and if it goes in the middle it affects the intestines.

There is also another disease called al-Kabar which is caused drinking in this way. Al-Bayhaqi explains the 'al-Kabar' means 'pain in the liver', and that 'a single gulp' means 'swallowing in great gulps'.^{xiii}

The benefit of pausing for breath while drinking is as follows: Breathing stops at the moment of swallowing – and yet there is a great need both for water and for breath. And if a man takes a breath and inhales a drop of water into the respiratory passage, then it will make him cough or choke. But if a man pauses while drinking to take a breath, then he will be safe from this.^{xiv}

Sweet water

Sweet water should be drunk. Water with sulphur, iodine and salts are not beneficial for the body. This is why the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) liked sweet water. A Geologist⁷ states that "Where there is a date tree there will be sweet water."

The difference between Zam Zam water and other water (city water) is in the quantity of calcium and magnesium salts. The content of calcium and magnesium salts is higher in Zam Zam water. This may be why this water refreshes tired pilgrims, but more significantly, the water contains fluorides that have an effective germicidal action, and beautiful for teeth.

Zam Zam water's appeal has always been universal. This water has never been chemically treated or chlorinated as is the case with water pumped into the cities. Biological growth and vegetation usually takes place in most wells. This makes the water unpleasant owing to the growth of algae causing taste and odor problems.

But in the case of the Zam Zam water well, you will not find sign of biological growth. Centuries ago, Hagar (may Allah be pleased with her) searched desperately for water in the hills of Safa and Marwa⁸ to give to her son Ismail, upon whom be peace. As she ran from one place to another in search of water, her child rubbed his feet against the sand. A spring of water surfaced, and by the grace of Allah (The Exalted) this water contains to this day to be called Zam Zam water.

Rain is a mercy

Scientists tell us that all objects falling from a certain height accelerate towards the ground. However, a raindrop is an exception. If water acted in accordance with this principle, it would pierce everything it touched, just like a bullet. However, raindrops descend at a constant speed, as if they had parachutes. They touch the wing of a butterfly with great delicacy and land on a violet's petal without harming it. In other words, rain is a Divine Mercy.

The functions of water in our body

The following are only some of the foremost functions of water. It controls bodily heat, helps excrete toxic substances via perspiration and urination, carries the substances in our blood, regulates the blood's acid-base balance, enables cells to absorb food by dissolving it (water is the best solvent), makes germination possible through humidity, and regulates the concentration inside the cell in order to maintain substance exchange.

⁷ A scientific professor who studies the earth's crust and its strata.

⁸ Hills between which pilgrims walk swiftly.

Section Three

Olive

People pay attention to other people or things according to the degree of their importance. Thus, if the Lord of the Universe explicitly mentions something in His revelation to humanity, it surely is something upon which we should reflect.

The Qur'an refers to olives directly in Surahs al-An'am, al-Nahl, al-Nur, 'Abasa, and al-Tin, and indirectly in Surah al-Mu'minun. In Surah al-Tin, Allah (The Exalted) mentions an oath by the fig and the olive. When the Qur'anic verses and Prophetic sayings about olives are studied closely, we see that the olive, as well as its tree and oil, are all given importance. ^{xv}

Olive trees

Olive trees, which live from 300 to 400 years on average, require much attention. They are grown mainly in Turkey, Greece, Italy, Spain, and North Africa, and, after the sixteenth century, also in North and South America, China and Japan.

While olives have been cultivated for some 6,000 years, they had been around for far longer than that: 39,000-year-old olive tree fossils have been found in archaeological excavations on Santorini Island. Excavations also have revealed that the ancient city of Klazomenai, near Izmir, Turkey, used to be an important centre for olives and olive oil. Today, there are more than 900 million olive trees in the world, 98% of which are in Mediterranean countries, where they occupy approximately 10 million hectares of land.

Those with olive orchards benefit not only from the olives, but also from the tree's branches, leaves, and roots. Leaves are left to Dry after pruning, and then used as fodder or made into various kinds of folk remedies. Branches and protruding roots removed by pruning are significant sources of firewood.

The characteristics of olives

Each olive tree yields abundant fruit once a year and then less the following year, due to climatic conditions and methods of cultivation. An olive weighs anywhere between 2-12 grams. The pit makes up 13-30%, the edible part makes up 66-85%, and the skin makes up the rest. Breakfast-type olives have a thinner skin and a smaller pit. One hundred grams of the edible part of a green olive gives us 144 calories of energy. It also contains 13.5 grams of oil, 2.8 grams of carbohydrate, 1.5 grams of protein, 90 mgs of calcium, 2 mgs of iron, and 300 units of vitamin A. In contrast, 100 grams of the edible part of a black olive gives us 207 calories of energy. It also contains 21 grams of oil, 1.1 gram of carbohydrate, 1.8 gram of protein, 77 mgs of calcium, 1.6 mgs of iron, and 60 units of vitamin A. Both kinds of olive also contain lesser amounts of other vitamins and minerals. In addition to being an important source of oil, olives also contain significant amounts of vitamin A, iron, and calcium. These nutritious qualities, which have been studied by scientists, are known to most people.

In the last few years, important studies have been made on a group of substances found within the olive's proteins. Until recently, this group of substances received only a little attention. Bisignano et al., of the University of Messina, Italy, studied secoiridoids, which are found in an olive's polyphenols, and their effects on micro organisms. They discovered that secoiridoids prevent and hinder the growth of some bacteria-causing diseases in our respiratory and digestive systems. In light of these observations on olives and olive oil, some substances have been offered as possible sources for developing new antibiotics.

Abu Usayd (may Allah be pleased with him) narrates, Allah's Messenger (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, "Consume olive oil and apply yourselves with it, for it comes from a blessed tree." ^{xvi}

Olive Oil

In Crete, a recent study showed that even though 90% of Cretans consume an average of 60-70 pounds of oil a year per person, the incidence of coronary disease is very low compared to other countries. Everyone knows that animal fats contain saturated fatty acids that vertically increase blood cholesterol levels. But mono-unsaturated fatty acids, like olive oil, control LDL levels while raising HDL levels. In fact, no other naturally produced oil has as large an amount of monounsaturated fatty acids (mainly oleic acid) as olive oil.

Olive oil also contains vitamins E and K, and polyphenols, delays aging and prevents carcinogenesis⁹, atherosclerosis¹⁰, liver disorders, and inflammations. Oleates in the oil also promote bone formation in children and protect the bones of the elderly. Even The Journal of the National Cancer Institute reported that olive oil offers strong protection in the fight against breast cancer.

Vinegar

The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) has also called vinegar a “blessed seasoning.”^{xvii} Modern science has confirmed that it indeed does have many “blessings.” A recent book called, simply, *Vinegar* talks about many ways in which vinegar benefits our health, and cites numerous scientific proofs of this claim. However, the benefits of vinegar were known even before the time of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace). The first-century Greek doctor Dioscorides, who travelled widely with the Roman army, was a careful observer of the medicine of his time. In his writings, he describes the use of a substance he calls ‘oxymel,’ or sour honey, for arthritis-like pains.

Over the centuries, oxymel – a combination of apple cider vinegar and honey – has been widely used to dissolve painful calcium deposits in the body, and for other health problems such as hay fever. This is because apple cider vinegar is nutrient-rich, including amino acids, enzymes, manganese, magnesium, potassium, and silicon. It improves metabolism and can counteract the effects of excess lactic acid in the bloodstream released during exercise and stress.

It has also been used as a tonic to help those with arthritis, high blood pressure, cholesterol, colds, constipation, cramps, diabetes, diarrhoea, indigestion, muscle stiffness, and sore throat. In his over 300-page book *Vinegar*, D. Lawrence cites over 100 studies in praise of the condiment. Many more claims of vinegar’s benefits are documented in respected journals like *Science Digest*, *The Pharmacological*¹¹ *Basis of Therapeutics* and *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Perhaps, though, the most important thing we can learn from Prophetic nutrition is moderation. As we sort through the wisdoms of Prophetic nutrition in our attempt to reconcile them with modern ‘science,’ we must always remember what the Qur’an (20:81) says, “Eat of the good things we have provided for your sustenance, but commit no excess therein.”

Honey

In Bukhari, ‘Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) narrates that, “Allah’s Apostle used to love sweet edible things and honey.” He also attributed many healing powers to honey. The Holy Qur’an (16:69) says, “From its [the bee’s] belly, comes forth a drink of varying colours wherein a cure is for people. Surely there is a sign for those who would give thought.”

Honey is not just a sugar, but also a complex combination of enzymes, organic acids, esters, antibiotic agents, trace minerals, and yet unidentified components! One pound of honey contains 1.4 grams of protein, 23 milligrams of calcium, 73 milligrams of phosphorus, 4.1 milligrams of iron, 1 milligram of niacin and 16 milligrams of vitamin C. Honey has been attributed externally with healing wounds and burns, and making the skin supple and smooth. Internally, honey is a cure-all, with specific benefits for the digestive system and as a tonic for general health and well-being.

A healing for mankind

As stated in 16:69, there is a natural healing power in honey of great benefit to mankind. This has been documented in the world’s oldest medical literature. For example the Sumerans and the Egyptian physicians about 4000 years ago used honey to treat internal and external wounds, ulcers, diseases of the eyes, lungs, skin and in particular, diseases of the stomach and intestines. The Chinese, Indians, Greeks and Romans have recorded similar practices. Hippocrates, the father of Western Medicine, used honey to treat a number of diseases. Ibn Sina, the Prince among Muslim physicians listed several beneficial uses of honey in his monumental work of medicine “*The Canon of Medicine*.” Among the uses he listed are: preservation of youthfulness, improvement of memory, a feeling of happiness, assists in digestion, increase in appetite and helps promote in one’s rendering of speech.

⁹ The evolution of an invasive cancer cell from a normal cell.

¹⁰ A disease of the arteries in which fatty plaque develop on their inner walls with eventual obstruction of blood flow.

¹¹ The science of the properties of drugs and their effects on the body.

Since 1937 it has been known that honey has antibacterial activity due to its high sugar concentration (76 g/100 ml), acidity (Ph=3.6-4.2) and the organic antibacterial compounds present in honey. The composition of honey is very complex containing a variety of biochemical compounds including vitamins, amino acids, enzymes, hormones, etc; it is used in the treatment of wounds and ulcers. Surgeons and physicians are using honey in the treatment of gunshot wounds, ulcers, surface wounds, cuts and abrasions, in the treatment of gastroenteritis (diarrhoea). In the academia a number of Ph.D. dissertations have been written on honey, particularly on its biochemical properties. Endocrinologists¹² say that glucose levels in blood of healthy volunteers are increased whereas among the diabetic patients it is decreased after consumption of honey.

Section Four

Health and Nutrition ^{xviii}

There are a number of words of advice and nutritional habits of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) which has substantial support in recent scientific literature. Among this advice is that we should eat whole foods, we should combine foods properly, we should eat foods in their seasons, and we should not drink with meals.

Modern science supports these habits by informing us that the combination of foods we eat and the order in which we eat them are very important factors in health. "Recently," it has been found that foods require different digestive processes in the body; thus, they are most easily digested when combined properly. Modern scientists say that improper food combinations can cause a person to inadequately digest their food, which can create imbalances in PH levels, improper absorption of nutrients, constipation or other digestive troubles. Dr. Ted Morter, in *Your Health... Your Choice*, advises us to not eat fresh fruit with any other food, even dried fruit, since it is a pre-digested food that moves straight through the stomach and into the intestines. When it is eaten with any other food, it ferments itself and anything else that is in the stomach.

The second advice given by Dr. Morter in his book is that we should start each meal off with something raw. The reason is that raw foods contain the enzymes we need to digest our food. His third rule of food combining is to avoid mixing protein and starches. We may eat starches with vegetables or vegetables with meat, but we should do our best to avoid combining starches and proteins. The reason is that proteins and starches require completely different environments for digestion. Proteins need a more acidic environment while carbohydrates and starches can be digested much more quickly. When a person combines them, neither food has the ideal environment. Furthermore, a protein meal takes up to five hours for the body to digest so it should be the last meal of the day when your body is not digesting other foods as well.

Improper food combining will not cause a person to become immediately sick, but it will prevent what they are eating from being digested and utilised to the best of its ability, which means they will need to eat more food to get additional nutrients.

Nutritionists also advise against improper food combining and tell us that many combinations can create synergistic allergic reactions. In the book 'The Whole Way to Allergy Relief and Prevention,' Dr. Krohn advises us not to combine milk with chocolate, mint, or fish; corn and bananas; beef and yeast; eggs and apples; or cola and chocolate.

In Sahih Bukhari, a number of examples can be found showing how carefully the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) combined foods. One hadith relates, "A man from among the Companions of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) said, 'The Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) forbade (mixing) unripe dates and dried dates, and (mixing) raisins and dried dates. 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) the mother of the believers, related that, "The Apostle of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) used to eat melon with fresh dates, and he used to say, 'The heat of the one is broken by the coolness of the other, and the coolness of the one by the heat of the other.'" He was also said to have never combined fish and milk.

The hadith provide numerous examples of the respect the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) had for the purity and value of water, and relate that he did not drink while eating a meal.

¹² The study of the endocrine glands and the substance they secrete (hormone).

Sahih Bukhari relates that, "The Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) came out from the valley of a mountain... there were some dried dates on a shield before us. We called him and he ate with us. He did not touch water." Experts in the field of food combining inform us that water impedes the digestive process in the stomach when eaten within a half hour of a meal.

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- i Muslim
 - ii Ibn Majah
 - iii Ibn Majah
 - iv Ibn Majah
 - v Tirmidhi
 - vi Ibn Majah
 - vii Bukhari
 - viii The Sun, Weekly, Sweden.
 - ix Abu Dawood
 - x Delmi
 - xi Bukhari and Muslim
 - xii Bukhari and Muslim
 - xiii Medicine of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)
 - xiv Medicine of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and grant him peace)
 - xv The fountain; July-September 2003: Issue 43; By S. Saracoglu
 - xvi Tirmidhi & Ibn Majah
 - xvii Muslim
 - xviii Health and Nutrition of The Prophet: Prophetic Sayings & Modern "Discoveries"By Karima Burns (MH, ND)