Journal of Nutrition and Food Security
Shahid Sadoughi University of Medical Sciences
School of Public Health
Department of Nutrition
Nutrition & Food Security Research Center

eISSN: 2476-7425 pISSN: 2476-7417 JNFS 2021; 6(3): 262-271 Website: jnfs.ssu.ac.ir

Food Health in the View of Islam

Seyyed Ahmad Mir Husseini Niri *[1]

[1] *College of Farabi, University of Tehran, Qom, Iran.*

ARTICLE INFO

REVIEW ARTICLE

Article history:
Received: 17 Mar 2021
Revised: 4 Jul 2021
Accepted: 4 Jul 2021

****Corresponding author:***
a.mirhoseininiri@gmail.com
College of Farabi, University of Tehran, Qom, Iran.

Postal code: 3713935568
Tel: +98-9126526695

ABSTRACT

Background: The instinct and natural tendency to eat food is an undeniable fact in human and all human beings, even the messengers of Allah and Infallible Imams (A.S) need it in order to keep themselves healthy. **Methods**: In this review study, using the teachings of the Holy Quran and other Islamic texts, the importance and role of food and healthy nutrition and its role in elevating human beings have been collected. **Results**: Formally, one of the influential factors in maintaining human's physical and mental health is his food and maintaining human health to preserve his real perfection and his unique position and dignity among creatures is mostly based on pure and healthy food. Allah has considered all human aspects in the Holy Quran, the book of human guidance and prosperity, and not neglecting, for example, his need of food, he has offered some guidance to meet this need. The Quran's criteria for choosing food are its lawfulness and purity. **Conclusion:** Considering the fact that "pure" means being pleasurable and good to eat, one of the interpretations offered in this article is that the man should avoid eating foods that are against human nature due to its being inconsistent with intact divine nature of human.

Keywords: *Food; Lawful; Pure; Impure; Nature; Health; Quran*

Introduction

Maintaining health and freshness of the human's body, mind, and spirit is a natural and instinct purpose of all people. On the one hand, it is considered as a purpose of life, and on the other hand, it is a means and the preliminary step to achieve physical and spiritual perfection. Food has a direct and influential relationship with human spirit; if the body is properly fed, it paves the way for the health of spirit and it in turn leads to human perfection and transcendence.

Different factors are involved in maintaining health, including preventing from harmful microbes, sorrow and pain, despair, and enjoying appropriate facilities, calm environment, good job, intimate and righteous friends, the possibility to afford the necessities of life and healthy food, entertainment and sport, adequate sleep and rest. All of these factors will affect maintenance of physical health and mental freshness and inseparable link between the body and soul requires that whatever is beneficial for the body be beneficial for the soul.

One of the above-mentioned factors is the human's food which is a key and influential factor related to the health. Some criteria and standards

This paper should be cited as: Mir Husseini Niri SA. ***Food Health in the View of Islam.*** *Journal of Nutrition and Food Security (JNFS)*, 2021; 6 (3): 262-271.

[Downloaded from jnfs.ssu.ac.ir on 2026-11-22]

[DOR: 20.1001.1.24767417.2021.6.3.12.8]
[DOI: 10.18502/jnfs.v6i3.6833]

should be considered when choosing and consuming food to have a good effect on the body and the soul. Quran, the book of guidance and plan of human life, not only has not neglected this important matter, but also has helped the man to choose appropriate food. What is important is what food criteria have been considered in the holy Quran for supplying food.

On the other hand, it is necessary to commit to avoiding some kinds of food that are forbidden in the Quran. Man should be careful to avoid those kinds of food that have been forbidden by Allah in order to guarantee his health. If corrupted or microbe-contaminated food is consumed, it will exhibit its harmful effects on the body and finally on the mind and soul. A food that is apparently pure, healthy, and energetic but belongs to other person and is unlawfully reached to the consumer, or the protein foods made of pig and monkey meat which are not apparently corrupted or contaminated but are unlawful under the Divine Law, as well as carcass, blood, and so forth are called *najes* (impure) under the Divine Law and the things that have a special contact with them are called *motinajis*. Some of them are inherently unlawful and some are accidentally unlawful and it is clear that by unlawful it means that eating and drinking them are forbidden.

As a whole, this article aimed to recognize the Quran's criteria for food in order to maintain and preserve good health.

Place of food in the Quran

In the view of the Holy Quran, the human is the most noble of all creatures and his needs also have been considered credible and valuable. Among human requirements is the need of food which has been considered important by Allah and He has given solutions and orders for meeting this requirement.

1.1. *Honoring human in creation for his valuable inherent needs:* Man has a high status and rank among divine creatures; since he is highly talented to grow both materially and spiritually and enjoys the power of reason and competence to reach voluntary legislative worship and even for having material advantages like fitness and ability to dominate other creatures. The Holy Quran has attracted attentions to human dignity in different words. Allah states in the verse 70 of the surah Al-Isrā: "We have honored the children of Adam and carried them on the land and the sea, and have made provision of good things, and exalted them above most of my creatures."

The second opportunity have been given to man to actualize this honoring is when Allah says: "We have provided them with good things." Considering that food is an example of good things, it is clear that religion has paid attention to this need and has helped people in this respect.

This privilege referred to in this verse about man is a great mark of relationship between food and human perfection and accordingly it speaks of man's needs, including the need of food. Man is an honorable creature and to reach perfection he should meet his needs, including food. It is due to the fact that a good food is not only eaten to meet man's physical need, but also his soul benefit from appropriate food. In another word, food influences the mind which in most cases can be recognized to the extent that not only experimental and empirical science has made it clear for the scientists, but also it has been made clear for the common people based on their daily experiences. Besides, strengthening the body and making it fleshy in a period of time, eating healthy and delicious food containing various ingredients along with other different factors brings mental tranquility. It should be said that not only the food itself but also the quality of eating food and its effect on mental and physical health is not deniable. The relationship between body and soul has been discussed and reviewed in related sciences. There are tangible signs of the reality of the existence of soul and its interaction with the body in some parts of human's normal life, such as sleeping, dreaming different scenes in sleep, hunger and repletion, sorrow and delight that naturally affect one another's health. Therefore, if a factor like food has physical effects on human body, it also affects the mind and soul and vice versa. Even in some cases, the effect of food on the body may not be clear in the view of

[Downloaded from jnfs.ssu.ac.ir on 2026-11-22]
[DOR: 20.1001.1.24767417.2021.6.3.12.8]
[DOI: 10.18502/jnfs.v6i3.6833]

empirical science, but its mental effect which is beyond the realm of empirical science is an undeniable fact. When according to divine teachings it is said, for example, that unlawful food affects human soul or when he starts eating, he invokes the name of Allah when, and shows that he is thankful of Allah at the end of eating, or when invoking the name of Allah for slaughtering an animal is the condition for its lawfulness, surely these factors affect the mind and soul, even if they are not based on empirical science.

In the above-mentioned verse about *rizq*, the most important example of which is food, Allah has used the adjective "pure". It shows that the man should pay attention to and consider this criterion when producing and meeting his needs. This criterion will be analyzed more thoroughly in the next part.

2.*The Quran's criteria for food consumption:* Quran has restricted eating food in several cases with two restraints of "lawful"[1] and "pure"[2]. Of course, it should be said that these two criteria are used for giving more emphasis. In other words, lawful food is the very pure food; the verse 4 of surah Al-Māʾida states that: "They ask you what is lawful to them. Say: "The good things are lawful to you." Taffsī Nemūna has noticed the opposite concept of this verse and stated that whatever is unlawful in Islam is among the wicked and impure things (Makrem Shīrāzī, 1992).

2.1. *Lawful food:* Allah has stated in the verse 168 of the surah Al-Baqara: "O men! Eat of what is lawful and good on the earth and do not follow the footsteps of Satan; surely he is your obvious enemy."

It is clear that the above verse, although in imperative form has addressed all the people for eating food on the earth, does not mean the necessity of implementation, but it means permission (*ibāha*). It is because of the cause of revelation of this verse; Kanza-l-erfān reads: "It is said that this ayah has been revealed about those people who has made good food and expensive clothes unlawful for themselves (Soyūrī, 2005). It means those people who lived in the thought of good asceticism and piety, deprived themselves of the luxury high benefits of life or due to the unlawfulness of some food in Judaism and the punishments prescribed for them against their oppression, and thought that these are unlawful to the Muslim too. Revelation of this verse nullified their imaginary prohibition and pronounced permission of using such kind of food; every food on the earth was pronounced lawful by the revelation of this verse as well as the verse 172 of surah Al-Baqara[3], except those cases allocated to and made unlawful in the Quran itself or the traditions of the infallible Imams (A.S).

There are different views about the place and the meaning of the word "*halāl*" [4] in this verse; it has been said that "*halālan*" is whether the object of the verb "culū"[5] or is the adjective for the omitted infinitive or it is the adverb of manner for "*mimmā fi-l-arḍ*".[6] In the first assumption it means: Eat of what its lawfulness has been made legally clear for you. In this case, the permission to eat is restricted to the legally lawful things and there is no reason to eat every edible thing on the earth. In the second assumption it means: Eat of whatever is edible on the earth, the lawful things. It means that all food is lawful to you except there is a legal prohibition to it. And the third assumption which according to Fāḍil Miqdād is the closest assumption to the purpose of the verse is that eat of all food on the earth in the case it is lawful to you (Al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn b. Shuʿba al-Ḥarrānī, 1984).

Here, the lawfulness of all kinds of food has been formally announced, except those cases prohibited under the divine law itself. To put it in another word, to consume food, its unlawfulness must be made clear under the divine law, if not it should be abstained.

2.2. *Pure food:* In most cases in the Holy Quran

[1] . See the holy Quran1:168; 5:88; 8:69; 16:114.
[2] . See the holy Quran 1:57, 168, and 172; 5: 88; 7:180; 20: 81; 23:51.
[3] . «يَاأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ كُلُواْ مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ وَ اشْكُرُواْ لِلَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُون»
[4] .lawful
[5] .eat
[6] . of what is on the earth

[Downloaded from jnfs.ssu.ac.ir on 2026-11-22]
[DOR: 20.1001.1.24767417.2021.6.3.12.8]
[DOI: 10.18502/jnfs.v6i3.6833]

the adjective "pure" comes after the adverb lawful. It is essential for the people to know this adjective for choosing and evaluating food.

Fāḍil Miqdād in Kanza-l-ʿerfān explains the meaning of "*ṭayyiban*"[7] in the verse 168 of Surah Al-Baqara as follows: *ṭayyib* has been used in different meanings: first, it should be pleasurable; second, it should be made lawful by the Divine Legislator; third, it should be pure; and forth, it should have no harm to the body and soul. The first meaning, due to *tabādur*[8] is the reality of the word and this is meant by the same verse. The second meaning requires repetition, i.e., eat of what is both lawful and pleasurable (Soyūrī, 2005). Although the word "pure" is applied in four meanings in the above statement, it is regarded by Fāḍil Miqdād that, by ellipsis of *tabādur*, it is real only by the meaning of pleasurable.

According to ´Allama Muṣṭafawī "pure" is an ideal thing without any superficial or hidden impurity and uncleanness (Muṣṭafawī, 2009). Considering that the ideal thing is pleasurable and delightful for man, this meaning is in line with what has been stated by Fāil Miqdād. In addition, the meaning of pleasurable for "pure" has also been mentioned by Rāghib (Rāghib Isfahanī, 1992). The meaning of clean for "pure" has been mentioned by a number of philologists (Bustānī, 1996, Ibn al-Athīr, 1989, Madanī, 2005).

Considering the rule "*yaʿrifu-l-ashyāʾ biaḍḍādihā*", the meaning of "pure" can be understood by reviewing its opposite meaning i.e. "impure" (Ibn Fāris, 1984). Impure means what is dirty, undesirable, and unfavorable both superficially and in depth (Muṣṭafawī, 2009). Therefore, pure means what is clean and desirable.

It is understood that "pure" means what is clean and purified which is desirable and pleasurable for people; it is the opposite of impure. Therefore, it can be said that by the command of the Quran people should use those kinds of food that are free from impurities both superficially (for example microbes) and in depth (for example eating what belongs to others without their consent) and that are pleasurable and desirable for human nature.

It is worth mentioning that sometimes a food may be desirable and pleasurable to someone but may not be desirable to another; this is a matter of different temperaments. It is due to the fact that hot food is not desirable to a person who has a hot temperament and vice versa. The elaboration of this matter relates to the traditional medicine and is beyond the scope of this article.

2.2.1. *The Quran's encouraging to eat pleasurable food:* Some time it is understood from the incorrect interpretations of some religious teachings that in the taste of religion, inclination towards pleasures is against spiritual perfection of human. In other words, divine titles of asceticism, piety, and chastity which are recommended by divine religions cannot be gathered with natural pleasures. In the early Islam, there are the names of some people in the history who withdraw formally from natural pleasures in the thought of good asceticism. When the Holy Prophet was informed of it, he clearly reminds them of their wrong method and forbade them from continuing such kind of manner (Ṭabarsī, 1993). Allah has stated the reality of this mater in the Holy Quran: "Say: who has made it unlawful to maintain the embellishment which has been brought forth to you by Allah and the good provision?"[9] (7: 32). He also has stated that: "O! You who believe! do not forbid the good things of what Allah has made lawful to you."[10]

When discussing the verse 168 of the surah Al-Baqara it was stated that the purpose of ordering to eat good things is not obligation but is "permission[11] after prohibition[12]"; i.e. the permission of a thing which was already prohibited or thought to be prohibited. Discharging of this prohibition in these verses against fantasy of unlawfulness of some kinds of food may serve to

[7] .pure

[8] . *tabādur* means that the meaning comes to the mind before the word itself which is the sigh of recognizing the real meaning out of figurative meaning.

[9] . «قُلْ مَنْ حَرَّمَ زِينَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي أَخْرَجَ لِعِبادِهِ وَ الطَّيِّباتِ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ»

[10] .«يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تُحَرِّمُوا طَيِّبَاتِ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ»

[11] .*ibāḥa*

[12] . *ḥaẓr*

[Downloaded from jnfs.ssu.ac.ir on 2026-11-22]

[DOR: 20.1001.1.24767417.2021.6.3.12.8]
[DOI: 10.18502/jnfs.v6i3.6833]

encourage breaking of this imaginary and invalid prohibition of all kinds of delicious food.

2.2.2. *Taking care of health and avoiding impurities upon the recommendation of the Quran:* The word "impure" has been used in several cases against the word "pure". Based on the analysis of the word pure and its meaning, impure (wicked) is an undesirable thing which is against the intact human nature. For the same reason, impurities are prohibited under the divine law. Characterizing the Holy Prophet, the Quran says: "He will make good things lawful to them and prohibit all impure things.". Narrating the status of the Holy Prophet of Islam in the previous books and the followers of the previous religions' knowing some of his characteristics according to the words of their heavenly books, this holy verse formally regards that making good things lawful and making impure things unlawful are among his specifications. This shows that using pure things and avoiding impure things has been an important matter of concern in all religions. Man should be reminded not to use impure and unclean food and to avoid them.

2.2.3. *Willingness to pure things and avoiding impurities is consistent with human nature and instinct*: Allah has stated in the verse 30 of surah Ar-Rūm that: "So set your face to the religion purely, the upright creation upon which He originated men. This is the nature based on which Allah has created men. There is no changing of creation of Allah. This is the upright religion." Considering the meaning of pure, it can be said that whatever is desirable to the intact human nature is pure. In other words, if man does not change his original nature based on which Allah has created him and does not make it unclean, he can recognize purities and this is the very true religion.

Therefore, the intact human nature and disposition seeks purities. To elaborate on this matter, Rāghib has said in Mufradāt under the entry of "*khubth*"[13], which has many instances, including invalid belief, telling lie or false statement, and undue acts. Following that, he has cited a tradition from the holy prophet as quoting: "*Al-Muʿminu aṭyabu min ʿamalihī wa-l- kafiru akhbathu min ʿamalihī*" (Rāghib Isfahanī, 1992). Therefore, it can be said that purified belief, words, and acts means to act based on the intact and pure human nature and whatever is against it is impure and wicked.

Ayatallah Makarim has explained that divine law never prohibits a purified thing created normally for the benefit of human and the system of "legislation" is in harmony with the system of "creation" (Makrem Shīrāzī, 1992).

Religious teachings specifically the Holy Quran orders people to use purified and delightful things. Therefore, choosing and consuming food should be consistent with the intact human nature and whatever is hateful to the soul and is against the human structure should be avoided which is forbidden based on the Holy Quran.

It should be said that eating purified and pleasant food and acting according to the human nature is not limited to the food only and it applies to all aspects of human life. In other words, it should be said that religion is based on human nature and in no case legislation is against the creation.

2.2.3.1. *Fundamental and derivative principles of religion are based on human nature:* Religious teachings are based on intact human nature. If unity is the most essential religious principle in Islamic religious doctrines, then a careful consideration will make it clear that it is based on intact natural human inclinations. Even worshiping Allah which is prescribed as specific acts of worship like saying prayer or intimate invocation has a natural origin. Following truthful leaders and inclination to perfect people indicates that they are natural desires which have been considered as the principles of Prophethood and Imamat.[14] Willingness to eternity providing which has the most costs and which is undeniable in all cultures during the history of human life is a matter to which the principle of resurrection completely

[13] .impurity

[14] . Spiritual leadership

[Downloaded from jnfs.ssu.ac.ir on 2026-11-22]

[DOR: 20.1001.1.24767417.2021.6.3.12.8]
[DOI: 10.18502/jnfs.v6i3.6833]

conforms. The human nature's hatred of oppression is in accordance with the principle of justice.

If derivative principles, such as orders of fasting, saying prayer, paying alms, Hajj pilgrimage, promotion of good and prevention of evil, and so forth, even the civil code are exactly recognized, it is found that all of them have been legislated according to natural human origins, which requires Legislator's wisdom.

The purity of food has been emphasized in religious teachings specifically the Holy Quran and pure means pleasant and delicious. This is because of the fact that food should be consistent with the intact human nature; otherwise, it is not in conformity to human structure and eating it is forbidden.

2.2.3.2. *Willingness to pure things***:** In several occasions the Holy Quran has admired something as pure, including good life (16:97), good speech (22;24) and (35:10), good land (7:58), good marriage (٢٤:٢٦), good offspring (3:38), goodly dwellings (9:72), good greeting and peace (14:24), goodly tree (14:24), clean earth (5:6), spend of good things (2:267), good property (2:168) and (5:88), and good death (16:32). All of these are favorable to human and corresponds to his nature. Considering, for example the first case, Allah has stated that: "Whoever does a righteous deed, male or female and he is a believer, surely we shall bestow him a good life." Good life for man and woman depends on faith to Allah and doing righteous deed and this righteous deed normally conforms to the clean human nature. Faith to Allah and belief in His unity also is in agreement with human creation. Therefore, whoever enjoys these characteristics will live a life conforming to his nature and creation. Therefore, this harmony between belief and action and the essence and good order originated from this balance, is the good life.

In most cases in the Holy Quran the attribute of "pure" applies to good property and food. The developmental and natural human structure has specific requirements and maintaining a good physical and mental health depends on meeting those requirements.

2.2.3.3. *Abhorring impure things:* Some things are edible, but inherently they do not conform to human disposition and cause a feeling of disgust, such as animal feces, blood, carcass, some insects like cockroaches, and so forth. Sometimes we may eat some of these things; it is due to inappropriate cultural propaganda against human nature. In the view of some scholars, it is the result of ignoring their material and spiritual harms and is an action to deviate intact human nature in which ungodly societies has become entangled.

Sometimes a food is not favorable because it is corrupted and human temperament feels hatred for that. Apart from harmful medical effects which can be recognized by knowledge and experience, a healthy nature also is hatred for that. This situation also applies to contaminated food and carcass. Therefore, the Holy Quran which has prescribed eating good things in the verse 168 of Surah Al-Baqara, has prohibited some kinds of food in other place stating that: "It is forbidden to you what dies of itself, and blood, and flesh of swine, and that on which any other name than that of Allah has been invoked, and the strangled (animal) and that beaten to death, and that killed by a fall and that killed by being smitten with the horn, and that which wild beasts have eaten, except what you slaughter, and what is sacrificed on stones set up (for idols) and that you divide by the arrows."[15]. These are the things eating of which is inconsistent with the intact human nature. Some of them like carcass and blood are normally abominable, and some others like animals with lawful flesh which have been slaughtered without involving the name of Allah are against the principle of unity which is the requirement of human nature because of disobedience of the order of Allah for their killing. Each of these prohibited things mentioned in this verse are inconsistent with the balanced human nature either in terms of reason, disposition, or feeling.

For the same reason the Holy Quran when

[15] Translator by Shakir.

[Downloaded from jnfs.ssu.ac.ir on 2026-11-22]

[DOR: 20.1001.1.24767417.2021.6.3.12.8]
[DOI: 10.18502/jnfs.v6i3.6833]

explaining the reason for unlawfulness of some kinds of food in the verse 145 of surah Al-An'am refers to their impurity[16], which implies mostly natural uncleanness. Considering other kinds of food like an animal killed without invoking the name of Allah, the Holy Quran calls them abomination, which means sinning and disobeying Allah which is a spiritual matter.

2.2.4. *Good things that should be avoided:* It was mentioned earlier that according to the religion [of Islam] and intact human nature people should eat pure food and should avoid impure food. However there are some cases of food should be avoided in spite of being pure.

2.2.4.1. *Eating food that belongs to others without their consent:* Eating and consuming others' food with their consent is favorable to people, for instance in parties the guest eats the host's food and this is enjoyable for both the guest and the host. Holding party brings reward from Allah both for the guest and the host. Above all, feeding the poor is mostly admired and recommended in the Holy Quran. For instance, the Holy Quran characterizes the family of the Holy Prophet in the verse 8 of surah Al-Dahr: "In spite of their need and interest in food they give their food to the poor, orphan, and captive".

Therefore, eating the food belonging to others under the name of lawful or pure is consistent with human nature; however, if a person eats the food belonging to others unrightfully, without their consent and permission or if he acquires a wealth under the names of usurpation, bribe, robbery, fraud, and cheating under scaling, etc., which are unlawful, that property cannot be possessed by and is unlawful to him. If that property is a food or it is converted to a food, eating of it is forbidden.

The reason for unlawfulness of using a property belonging to other is not because it is not favorable, for example eating unclean food, and belonging a food to other person in its own does not make human disposition hatred of it. Here, blood, carcass, and impurities are not the case; the property is apparently clean and favorable; however, it belongs to other who does not consent.

Eating food belonging to other without his consent is also against human nature. Any form of violating the right of others specifically eating their food unrightfully is not consistent with human nature. Whoever takes the property belonging to others unrightfully, although he may find himself successful or happy, in fact he will be conscious-stricken, except when he ruins this hidden conscious through committing frequent sins and mistakes. In such a case, the person who takes possession of other's property and right without his consent is reproached and blamed and this act is not consistent with his creation. By doing this, he has caused a change and an imbalance in his behavior and his structure. In other words, he has made his intact and balanced disposition imbalanced. Although he apparently kills this feeling in himself, he may not be immune to its destruction and corruption.

Another reason for inconsistency of violating other's right with human nature is that all cultures consider this act as an oppression which is against justice. Justice is a requisite for formative creation of all the universe. A tradition from the Holy Prophet reads: "It is by justice that heavens and the earth are stable" (Fiyṣ Kāshānī, 1995). It means that all the elements of the universe are in harmony and every element is placed in its proper position according to the wisdom of the whole system without any deficiency. Any type of imbalance and disorder is oppression among which is eating food belonging to other people.

Oppression is divided into three categories, including oppressing Allah, oppressing one's self, and oppressing people (Ibn Shu´ba Harrānī, 1984). In all three instances, it is clear that oppression is a kind of disorder and imbalance. Oneness of Allah is an instinctive mater consistent with the reality of human existence; therefore, polytheism is taking

[16] *Rijs* (impurity in English) has different examples including natural impurity like unclean and malodourous food, rational impurity like impurity of infidels, legal impurity like wine, and holistic impurity like carcass which is naturally, rationally, and legally abominable. (Rāghib Iṣfahānī, 1992, vol. 3, page 342).

[Downloaded from jnfs.ssu.ac.ir on 2026-11-22]
[DOR: 20.1001.1.24767417.2021.6.3.12.8]
[DOI: 10.18502/jnfs.v6i3.6833]

away from this reality. In this classification, the second and the third meanings of oppression and their reference to inconsistency with human creation and human nature are clearer. It is because of the fact that oppressing one's self will formally lead to committing sin and objection to Allah. On the one hand, it refers to the first meaning of oppression, and on the other hand, due to the mischief and harmful effects of committing sin, it is obvious that it is inconsistent with human nature and instinct. Since oppressing people, which is more relevant to taking possession of other's property by force and eating food belonging to others unrightfully, is inconsistent with justice which is the natural human origin, it is regarded as oppression.

Accordingly, since eating the food belonging to others without their consent is disobedience of Allah and since objection to Allah deviates human from his monotheist nature, it will not be pure. On the other hand, since taking possession of other's property by force is oppressing its owner, and oppression is deviation from natural balance, such a property is not pure.

2.2.4.2. *Extravagance and overeating***:** Sometimes a desirable pure food may become undesirable and impure because of its harmful effects, like a good food that is decayed or is contaminated and made impure. Also, the way the food is eaten may affect it, like eating food when the person is full and he has no desire to eat. The traditional as well as the modern medicine have referred to the harmful effects of this way of eating which is inconsistent with human nature. Our religious teachings and the words of Infallible Imams relating to eating formalities also discuss the way of eating under the title of preferable religious acts (*Mustaḥabbāt*) and abominable acts (*Makrūhāt*). Imam Ṣādeq (A.S) is quoted as saying: "Overeating makes the person heard-heartened and cruel and invokes sexuality excitement." (Majlisī, 1983). This shows physical and spiritual destruction of the human.

Excessive eating and over eating has many harmful effects the most important of which is fatting and gaining weight which is the source of many cardiovascular diseases. Suffice it to say, for reproaching overeating Imam Ṣādeq (A.S) has stated that the most hateful state of man to Allah is when he is full and the best situation for spiritual nearness to Allah is when the stomach is empty (Khalid al-Barqi, 1971).

Among other harmful effects of overeating referred to in Islamic traditions are leprosy (Kuliynī, 1987), heart-heartedness, sexuality excitement, fading of wisdom and knowledge, devaluating daily prayers (Majlisī, 1983),indolence to perform acts of worship (Nūrī, 1988), hypersomnia, fading of intelligence, corruption of soul (Tamīmī Āmadī, 1990), dreaming nightmare and bad dreams (Khalīlī, 1991).

Overeating is an instance of extravagance. Extravagance and lavishness are reprehensible and cause wealth to spoil. If those kinds of food on which human life depends are used excessively, it will set the scene for food shortage.

The Holy Quran mentions in different cases of extravagance and the necessity to avoid it not only in lawful and permissible matters but also in recommended matters. For instance, spending money in Allah's cause (*infāq*) is an admirable act and in some cases it is obligatory the virtue of which has been emphasized in religious teachings; however, the Holy Quran has forbidden extravagance and wastefulness in this respect. In the verse 29 of surah Al-Asrā [17]**,** Allah orders His prophet not to be extravagant in this regard. He also has characterized the servants of the Beneficent Allah as saying: "Those who, when they spend, are not extravagant and not niggardly, but maintain moderation." (25: 67) This verse rejects any kind of extravagance and lavishness as well as negligence in meeting necessary expenditure and recommends virtuous people to be moderate.

Going beyond moderation in any case which is against the moderate disposition of man has been interpreted as extravagance in the Holy Quran.

[17]. « وَ لا تَجْعَلْ يَدَكَ مَغْلُولَةً إِلى عُنُقِكَ وَ لا تَبْسُطْها كُلَّ الْبَسْطِ فَتَقْعُدَ مَلُوماً مَحْسُوراً»

[Downloaded from jnfs.ssu.ac.ir on 2026-11-22]
[DOR: 20.1001.1.24767417.2021.6.3.12.8]
[DOI: 10.18502/jnfs.v6i3.6833]

Considering lavishness and overeating which are relevant to the subject, it formally avoids extravagance after prescribing eating and drinking food in its famous verse "eat and drink, but do not be extravagant." (7: 31)

2.2.5. *Cases in which the food is impure***:** The food should be consistent with human status. Therefore, if the food is contaminated or toxicant it is against the moderate human nature and cannot be consumed. In addition, if the food is legally unlawful like the flesh of animals which are unlawful to eat, carcass, or the flesh of animals which have been slaughtered without involving the name of Allah it should not be eaten; otherwise, it is considered sin, disobedience of Allah, and oppression. Also, when the food belongs to other person, it is both legally forbidden and considered sin, and since it is infringement of the rights of others, it is against justice and is considered an oppression. Also, if the food is naturally hateful to the soul it is against the intact human nature.

Considering the way, the food is eaten there are several cases which can be regarded as impure and are against egalitarian human nature, including the following:

If the person eats food when he is full or when he overeats; when the person eats food without paying attention to the cleanliness of the place or the dishes, when he does not wash his hands before eating the food; if he eats food when there is wine ready to serve on the table, or if he eats food in a broken dish.[18]

Conclusion

The Holy Quran has mentioned two criteria for using food, including lawfulness and purity. Considering the verse 4 of surah Al-Mā´edah, it was understood that these two criteria also serve as an emphasis and Allah has made lawful good things. In other words, lawful food is the same as pure food. Pure food is clean and is favorable and enjoyable for people. In contrast, impure food that is superficially and in hidden unclean and unfavorable for the soul is unlawful in the view of the Quran and it should be avoided. The Quran prevents people from eating impure food, indicating the importance of human health. Of course, the intact human soul and nature are disgusted of eating impure food and desire to eat pure food which reflects the consistency between legislation and creation, i.e. consistency between human nature and divine religion. Although eating pure food is recommended by the Quran, sometimes it should be avoided or it can be said that in some cases it may turn into impure food. In this case, it should be avoided, including eating the food belonging to others without their consent, overeating and extravagance, eating when the stomach is full or in the case of lacking appetite, eating food in an unclean place of unclean dish, eating food in the presence of wine, and etc.

[18] See Jawāhira-l-Kalām, vol. 36, pp. 432-470.

References

Al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. al-Ḥusayn b. Shuʿba al-Ḥarrānī 1984. Tuḥaful ´Ughūl. Jāmi´atu-l-modarrisīn: Qom.

Bustānī FA 1996. Farhang Abjadī. Islamī: Tehran.

Fiyṣ Kāshānī M 1995. Tafsīra-l- Ṣāfī. Maktabata-l- ṣadr: Tehran.

Ibn al-Athīr M 1989. Al-Nahaya fī gharībi-l-hadīth va-l-athar. Ismāʿīlīān: Qom.

Ibn Fāris A 1984. Muʿjam Maghāīās Al-lugha. Maktabu-l-Aʿalāma-l-Islāmī: Qom.

Ibn Shu´ba Harrānī Hb 1984. Tuḥaful ´Ughūl. Jāmi´atu-l-modarrisīn: Qom.

Khalid al-Barqi A 1971. Al-Maḥāsin (Arabic: المَحاسِن) Dāru-l- Kutuba-l- Eslāmīyya.

Khalīlī Mʿ 1991. Ṭibu-ṣ-ṣādiq ʿAṭāīī: Tehran.

Kuliynī M 1987. Al-kāfī. Dāro-l- Kutuba-l-Eslāmīyya: Tehran.

Madanī K 2005. Al-ṭarāza-l-awwal. Āla-l-bayt (A.S) li iḥyāʾil-turātha-l- ʿArabī: Mashshad.

Majlisī M 1983. Biḥāru-l-anwāra-l-jami´a li durari akhbāri aʾimmata-l-aṭhār. Dāru-l-iḥyāa-l-turātha-l-´Arabī: Beirut.

Makrem Shīrāzī N 1992. Tafsīr Nimūna. Dāru-l-Kutuba-l-Eslāmī: Tehran.

Muṣṭafawī Ḥ 2009. Al-taḥqīq fī kalimāti Qurana-l-karīm. Center for publication of the works of Allāma Muṣṭafawī: Beirut.

[Downloaded from jnfs.ssu.ac.ir on 2026-11-22]

[DOR: 20.1001.1.24767417.2021.6.3.12.8]
[DOI: 10.18502/jnfs.v6i3.6833]

Nūrī Ḥ 1988. Mustadrika-l-wasāʾil wa moustanbiṭa-l-masāʾil. Āla-l-bayt (A.S): Qom.

Rāghib Isfahanī Ḥ 1992. Mufradātu alfāẓa-l-Quran. Dāru-a-Qalam: Beirut.

Soyūrī M 2005. Kanza-l-ʿerfān fī fiqha-l-Quran. Maktabat-al-Murtaḍawīa li-Iḥyāi-l-āthāri-l-ja´farīya: Tehran.

Ṭabarsī F 1993. Muʿjama-l-bayān fī tafsīra-l-Quran. Nāṣir Khosro: Tehran.

Tamīmī Āmadī A 1990. Ghuraru-l-ḥikam wa duraru-l-kalim. Dāru-l- Kitāba-l- Eslāmī: Qom.

[Downloaded from jnfs.ssu.ac.ir on 2026-11-22]

[DOR: 20.1001.1.24767417.2021.6.3.12.8]

[DOI: 10.18502/jnfs.v6i3.6833]