# SAMPLE

## Food and Drink: The Lawful and the Good

Dietary Guidance from the Quran

Aira Aurora

Free sample: Introduction & Chapter 1

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This free sample contains the Introduction and Chapter 1. The complete book contains the full contents above.

# Introduction

Food and drink are among the most basic facts of human life. Every person eats. Every person drinks. The Quran does not treat this as a mundane necessity to be rushed through on the way to more spiritual matters. It treats eating and drinking as acts filled with meaning — governed by commands, surrounded by etiquette, and connected to the deepest principles of faith.

The Quran addresses food more than any other practical topic except perhaps prayer. It specifies what is lawful and what is prohibited. It commands gratitude before and after meals. It prescribes fasting as a discipline of the body and the soul. It connects the act of eating to the remembrance of Allah, the care of the community, and the preparation for worship. In Surah Al-Baqarah, Allah says:

"O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth that is lawful and good, and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy" (2:168).

This single verse — the Quran's foundational statement on food — contains three commands: eat from what is lawful, eat from what is good, and do not follow Satan. The commands are deceptively simple. Together, they establish a framework that governs not only what the believer puts in their mouth but how they think about provision, how they approach consumption, and how they resist the forces that would corrupt their relationship with food.

This book examines what the Quran says about food and drink — the principle of eating from what is lawful and good, the specific prohibitions, the prohibition of intoxicants, the rules of slaughter, the discipline of fasting, the duty of gratitude, the virtue of moderation, the obligation to feed others, and the place of the table as a site of remembrance. It draws primarily from the Quran as its source, with Hadith clearly distinguished where referenced.

This is the fourth book in the Life in the Quran sub-series of the NurOne series. The first three books covered marriage, children, and work. This book covers what sustains the body that does the work — the food that nourishes, the drink that refreshes, and the disciplines that keep consumption within the boundaries of what Allah has commanded.

Let us begin, as the Quran begins its guidance on food, with the command to eat from what is lawful and good.

# Chapter 1: Eating from What is Lawful and Good

The Quran's first and most comprehensive statement about food appears in Surah Al-Baqarah:

"O mankind, eat from whatever is on earth that is lawful and good, and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Indeed, he is to you a clear enemy" (2:168).

This verse is the foundation of the Quranic dietary framework. It contains three elements that together define the believer's relationship with food. The first is halal — lawful. The food must be permitted by Allah. The second is tayyib — good, pure, wholesome. The food must be of a quality that benefits the body and the soul. The third is the warning against Satan, whose "footsteps" include every path that leads to consumption outside the boundaries of what is lawful and good.

The distinction between halal and tayyib is significant. Something may be lawful in principle but not good in a particular context — for example, food that is permitted but harmful to the body, or food obtained through dishonest means. The Quran commands both: the food must be lawful AND good. The believer who eats only what is halal but does not consider whether it is tayyib has fulfilled only half the command.

The verse begins with "O mankind" — not "O you who believe." This is significant. The Quran's dietary guidance is not addressed only to Muslims; it is addressed to all human beings. The principles of lawful and good eating are universal — they apply to everyone, because the responsibility of eating is universal. The specific prohibitions that follow in later verses address the believers, but the foundational principle is human.

In Surah Al-A'raf, Allah says:

"O children of Adam, take your adornment at every mosque, and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not the excessive" (7:31).

Again, the address is to the "children of Adam" — all of humanity. The permission to eat and drink is universal, and so is the prohibition of excess. The Quran does not restrict food to a particular people; it restricts it to particular principles.

The Quran repeatedly describes food as a blessing from Allah. In Surah Al-Baqarah:

"And We gave you the shade of clouds and sent down to you manna and

quails, saying: Eat of the good things We have provided for you. And they did not wrong Us, but they were wronging only themselves" (2:57).

The phrase "eat of the good things" appears throughout the Quran. Allah does not merely permit food; He describes it as "good" and commands the believer to eat from it. Food is not a necessary evil or a burden of physical existence; it is a blessing, and the proper response to a blessing is gratitude.

In Surah An-Nahl, Allah provides a detailed list of foods and drinks:

"And from the fruits of palm trees and grapevines you take intoxicant and good provision. Indeed, in that is a sign for a people who reason" (16:67).

And:

"And the livestock — He has created them for you. In them is warmth and numerous benefits, and from them you eat" (16:5).

And:

"And it is He who subjected the sea for you to eat from it tender meat and to extract from it ornaments you wear. And you see the ships plowing through it, and that you may seek of His bounty, and that you may be grateful" (16:14).

These verses present food as a gift from the One who created the sea, the land, the animals, and the plants. The believer who eats is consuming a provision that Allah designed, provided, and permitted. The act of eating is therefore not merely biological; it is an encounter with divine generosity.

The Quran connects the physical act of eating to the spiritual state of the believer. In Surah Al-Ma'idah:

"O you who believe, fulfill all contracts. Lawful for you are the animals of grazing livestock except what is announced to you within — those you hunt being in the state of ihram. Indeed, Allah decrees as He wills" (5:1).

The command to eat from what is lawful is placed within the broader framework of fulfilling contracts and following Allah's commands. Food is not separate from faith; it is part of it. The person who is careless about what they eat is being careless about a command of Allah, and the person who is attentive to what they eat is practicing their faith in the most ordinary moments of their day.

In Surah Al-An'am, Allah says:

"So eat of that upon which the name of Allah has been mentioned, if you are believers in His verses" (6:118).

The phrase "if you are believers in His verses" connects the act of eating to the act of faith. The person who eats with attention to what Allah has permitted and what He has prohibited is demonstrating their belief through their consumption. The person who ignores these distinctions is, by implication, not acting as a believer.

The Quran's approach to food is permissive by default. The general rule is that all food is permitted unless specifically prohibited. In Surah Al-An'am:

"Say: I do not find in what has been revealed to me anything forbidden to one who would eat it unless it be a dead animal or blood spilled out or the flesh of swine — for indeed, it is impure — or it is disobedience, dedicated to other than Allah" (6:145).

This verse establishes the default: food is permitted. The prohibitions are specific and limited — dead animals, blood, pork, and animals sacrificed to other than Allah. Everything else is halal. The Quran does not create a long list of forbidden foods; it creates a short list and leaves the rest to the believer's enjoyment.

This approach reflects a broader Quranic principle: Allah does not burden the believer with unnecessary restrictions. The prohibitions are specific because they serve specific purposes — health, hygiene, spiritual discipline, and the rejection of idolatry. The permissions are broad because food is a blessing, and the believer is meant to enjoy it.

End of free sample. The full book is available at putrabooks.github.io

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Aira Aurora is an independent researcher and writer specializing in Quranic studies. Her work focuses on close reading of the Quranic text, exploring its themes, narratives, and moral framework with attention to both the original Arabic and the broader human context.

The NurOne master series is her primary project -- a multi-sub-series exploration of the Quran covering prophets, people, places, events, lessons, commands, signs, the unseen, the hereafter, and everyday life. Each book is a close reading of the Quranic verses on a specific topic, presented in clear, accessible language.

Her work is published under the pen name Aira Aurora.

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