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Some Protein-, Fat-, and Water-Based Foods in the Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ Diet

Hız. Peygamber'in (s.a.v.) Beslenmesinde Bazı Protein, Yağ ve Su Bazlı Gıdalar

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Abstract

In this study protein, fat and water in the foods consumed by the Prophet in his daily life were analyzed. For this purpose, meat and milk were prepared from protein-based foods, olive oil from fats, and water from nutrients by analyzing basic Islamic history, al-sīrah al-nabawīyyah sources and the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The method of this study is to analyze the Prophet's diet from the perspective of contemporary concepts of nutrition. The concept of nutrition refers to the proper use of nutrients to maintain a healthy life. Foods are made up of the basic nutrients of: protein, fat, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, and water. These building blocks are present in food in varying amounts. Fat, as an energy store, provides the body with energy. While some vitamins are taken into the body with fat, fat is essential for the production of some hormones that keep the body functioning properly. Water, another nutrient found in food, is essential for digesting nutrients, transporting them to the tissues, and removing waste and excess heat generated by the cells. As a conclusion, based on historical records, it can be said that the Prophet consumed meat and milk from protein-based foods, olive oil from fats, and water as a nutrient in a balanced way in his daily life within the framework of the possibilities of the period in which he lived. In conclusion, protein, fat and water were also included in the Prophet's diet.

Keywords: Islamic History, Prophet Muhammad, Nutrition, Food, Protein, Fat, Water

Öz

Bu çalışmada Hz. Peygamber'in günlük hayatında tükettiği gıdalardaki protein, yağ ve su analiz edilmiştir. Bu amaçla siyer ve İslam tarihi temel kaynakları ve Hz. Peygamber'in hadisleri incelenerek protein kaynaklı besinlerden et ve süt, yağlardan zeytinyağı, besin ögesi olarak ise su hazırlanmıştır. Bu çalışmanın yöntemi, Hz. Peygamber'in tükettiği besinleri çağdaş beslenme kavramları perspektifinden açıklamaktır. Beslenme kavramı, sağlıklı bir yaşam sürdürmek için besinlerin doğru kullanımını ifade eder. Gıdalar protein, yağ, karbonhidrat, vitamin, mineral ve su gibi temel besin maddelerinden oluşur. Bu yapı taşları gıdalarda değişen miktarlarda bulunur. Yağ, bir enerji deposu olarak vücuda enerji sağlar. Bazı vitaminler vücuda yağ

ile alınırken, yağ vücudun düzgün çalışmasını sağlayan bazı hormonların üretimi için gereklidir. Besinlerde bulunan bir diğer besin maddesi olan su ise besinlerin sindirilmesi, dokulara taşınması ve hücreler tarafından üretilen atık ve fazla ısının uzaklaştırılması için gereklidir. Sonuç olarak tarihi kayıtlara dayanarak Hz. Peygamber'in yaşadığı dönemin imkânları çerçevesinde günlük hayatında protein ağırlıklı gıdalardan et ve sütü, yağlardan zeytinyağını, besin olarak da suyu dengeli bir şekilde tükettiği söylenebilir. Neticede Hz. Peygamber'in beslenme düzeninde protein, yağ ve su yer almıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İslam Tarihi, Hz. Peygamber, Beslenme, Gıda, Protein, Yağ, Su

Introduction

Nutrition relates to the consumption of nutrients for growth, maintenance of life, and a healthy condition. The human body contains on average 59% water, 18% protein, 18% fat, 4.3% minerals, and 0.7% carbohydrate, with the remainder being vitamins, nucleic acids, hormones, and enzymes. Foods are very diverse and contain different amounts of nutrients in their composition.¹ Scientific research shows that when food is brought into a laboratory and analyzed, six basic nutrients are found: protein, fat, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, and water. They are all present in foods in varying proportions.² Carbohydrates, lipids, and proteins are considered organic and macro nutrients. Water, minerals, and vitamins are labeled inorganic and micro.³ The nutrients that the body needs are cooked into the food, which is then decorated to be more appetizing.⁴ The composition of protein includes: carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, sulfur, and sometimes phosphorus. It is also an important nutrient in terms of its structure in animal foods, which have an important place in human nutrition.⁵

¹ Ayşe Baysal, *Beslenme* (Ankara: Hacettepe Üniversitesi Yayınları, 1983), 9-15.

² Osman Koçtürk, *Besin ve Beslenme* (Varlık Yayınevi, 1967), 35.

³ Ayla Ünsal, "Beslenmenin Önemi ve Temel Besin Öğeleri", *Kırşehir Ahi Evran Üniversitesi Sağlık Bilimleri Dergisi* 2, sy 3 (01 Ocak 2019): 2.

⁴ Alparlan Özyazıcı, *Din ve Bilim Işığında Oruç ve Sağlık* (Ankara: Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2017), 9-10.

⁵ Sevinç Türker, *Gıda Sözlüğü*, I (Ankara: Güneş Kitabevi, 1988), 126.

Our body is made up of cells, with the building blocks of these cells being called proteins. Protein enables the growth and repair of tissues.⁶ If human limbs are like a car, proteins are the brakes, carburetors, and wheels of the limbs. Just as a car cannot live without wheels, a human cannot live without proteins.⁷ The body's tissues and organs are formed by the combination of specific cells. Protein is the most important nutrient for growth and development. Protein, which is a necessary nutrient for cell renewal, must be obtained from food.⁸ Enzymes in the protein structure play a role in digestion, while hormones in the protein structure provide the internal balance of the body.⁹ Enzymes in the protein structure ensure the utilization of nutrients in living organisms and the excretion of harmful substances through chemical events.¹⁰ Animal and plant foods contain different amounts of protein. Of the protein sources that can be converted into body protein, 75-80% are found in meat, fish, milk, and their derivatives.¹¹

Fat, which is an energy store, gives the body energy. Fat is essential for the absorption of some vitamins into the body and for the production of some hormones that keep the body working properly.¹² Fat is a substance which consists of esters of fatty acids that dissolve in substances such as chloroform and benzene but do not dissolve in water.¹³ Fats, which are superior to carbohydrates in terms of energizing and storing energy,¹⁴ constitute approximately 18% of the human body, although the precise amount varies from person to person.¹⁵ Fats are also necessary for the body to absorb some fat-soluble vitamins. Fats found in foods and stored by animals are called saturated fatty acids, while olive oil, fish oil, and vegetable oils are called unsaturated fatty ac-

⁶ Ünsal, "Beslenme'nin Önemi ve Temel Besin Öğeleri", 4.

⁷ Koçtürk, *Besin ve Beslenme*, 40.

⁸ Baysal, *Beslenme*, 48; Ayşe Baysal, *Beslenme Kültürümüz* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1990), 8.

⁹ Özyazıcı, *Din ve Bilim Işığında Oruç ve Sağlık*, 13.

¹⁰ Bahtiyar Ünver vd., *Besin Mikrobiyolojisi* (İstanbul: Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 1981), 6,7.

¹¹ Baysal, *Beslenme*, 53.

¹² Baysal, *Beslenme Kültürümüz*, 8.

¹³ Türker, *Gıda Sözlüğü*, 164; Ahmet Canbaşı, *Gıda Bilimi ve Teknolojisi* (Adana: Çukurova Üniversitesi Ziraat Fakültesi, 1992), 12.

¹⁴ Gazanfer Bingöl, *Lipidler* (Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Eczacılık Fakültesi, 1976), 5.

¹⁵ Ünsal, "Beslenme'nin Önemi ve Temel Besin Öğeleri", 3.

ids. Phospholipids, which are considered to be lipids, are found in egg yolk, brain, liver, lung, kidney, heart, and milk, while cholesterol is found in the tongue and animal fats. Leaves, fruit peels, shellfish, and some plants and insects contain beeswax, which is a type of fat. Olives, sunflowers, sesame, cottonseed, walnuts, hazelnuts, peanuts, soybeans, and corn are all plant foods that contain oil.¹⁶

There are some recent studies on the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and nutrition. For example, Akgün's master's thesis titled "Cuisine in Prophet Mohammed Era" is a qualified study in this field.¹⁷ Öztürk and Akgün's article titled "Milk as a Foodstuff in Early Islamic Society,"¹⁸ Efe's article titled "The Relationship of Nutrition and Health in The Period of The Prophet,"¹⁹ Dülber's article titled "The General Principles of Nutrition in The Sunnah of The Prophet Muhammad and The Factors Preventing Complying with These"²⁰ are some of the studies on this subject. This article, on the other hand, evaluates the Prophet's diet from a different perspective, and discusses the basic elements of nutrition such as protein, fat and water-based nutrients. In this article, the meat and milk from protein-based foods, olive oil from fat-based foods, and water from nutrients consumed by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ were arranged by analyzing basic historical sources and the Prophet's sayings (hadith).

1. Meat

Meat, a source of animal protein, is one of the basic nutrients. There are different types of meat that contain protein, fat, water, a small amount of glycogen, mineral salts, vitamin B, and flavoring organic elements. While the amount of protein and fat in meat varies depending on whether the meat is

¹⁶ Ünsal, "Beslenmenin Önemi ve Temel Besin Öğeleri", 3, 4.

¹⁷ Sevim Demir Akgün, Hz. Peygamber Döneminde Yemek Kültürü (Sakarya Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, 2007).

¹⁸ Sevim Demir Akgün - Levent Öztürk, "Erken Dönem İslâm Toplumunda Bir Besin Maddesi Olarak Süt", *Kilitbahir* 22 (Mart 2023), 1-21.

¹⁹ Zehra Gençel Efe, "Hz. Peygamber döneminde beslenme ve sağlık ilişkisi", *Din ve İnsan Dergisi*, 3/6 (2023), 27-45.

²⁰ Hatice Dülber, "Hz. Peygamber'in Sünnetinde Beslenme ile İlgili Genel İlkeler ve Bunlara Uymayı Engelleyen Faktörlerin Tespiti," *Kalemname* 8/15 (Haziran 2023), 204-233.

fatty or lean, more than half of meat is water.²¹ In the Qur'an, Allah (SWT) has laid down some basic principles about nutrition, forbidding what is filthy and harmful to human beings, and permitting what is clean, good, and beneficial²² (al-Bakara 2/172; al-Mā'idā 5/4; al-A'rāf 7/32). While the Qur'an refers to the types of animals that were customary to eat at the time, such as camels and cattle, it does not elaborate on the halal animals, mentioning only pork as a forbidden meat.²³ These verses forbid the meat of animals that have died spontaneously, animal blood (blood that flows from the animal), pork, and animals that are not slaughtered in the name of Allah (al-Nahl 16/115; al-An'ām 6/145; al-Bakara 2/173). As can be seen, there are prohibitions on eating in Islam related the type of death of the animal, the method of slaughter, and the purpose of slaughter.²⁴ Due to the abundance of clean and halal foods, it would be more preferable to mention the forbidden ones.²⁵ To summarize, animals have been created to be used by human beings, who are allowed to benefit from many aspects of them, such as their meat, milk, skin, and strength (for riding and pulling). However, some conditions and rules have been imposed on the eating of their meat, both in terms of form and animal species. First of all, the types of domestic and wild animals that are permitted to be eaten have been defined, and important conditions have also been imposed on the slaughtering of animals. Animals slaughtered in the name of other than Allah (such as an idol) are forbidden.

However, it is known that during the Prophet's ﷺ lifetime, camel, cattle, and beef were the most commonly eaten meats, as well as some hunting animals, domestic birds, and seafood (such as fish).²⁶ The Arabs had the ability to dry and preserve meat. This is where the days of *Tashrik*, one of the days of

²¹ Baysal, *Beslenme*, 240, 241.

²² Asaf Ataseven ve Mehmet Şener, "Domuz", içinde *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 1994, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/domuz>.

²³ Mehmet Şener, "Hayvan" (İstanbul: TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi, 1998).

²⁴ Şener, "Hayvan".

²⁵ *Kur'an Yolu Tefsiri*, t.y., 1/257-260.

²⁶ Mehmet Apaydın, "Siyer Coğrafyası'nın İklimi, Bitki Örtüsü ve Hayvanları", içinde *2014-2015 Ders Yılı Siyer Mektebi Müfredatı Hz. Peygamber (sas) Dönemi Siyer Coğrafyası* (İstanbul, 2014), 35-42; Mahmut Kelpetin, "İslâm'dan Önce Tâif", *Marmara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 54, sy 54 (2018): 93.

pilgrimage, got its name from. Indeed, one of the meanings of *tashrik* is to cut meat and dry it in the sun by laying it on rocks.²⁷ One day, a person was brought to the Messenger of Allah. The man began to tremble in his presence, whereby the Prophet said to him, “Calm down. I am not a king; I am the son of a Quraysh woman who ate dried meat.”²⁸ It is clear from this statement of the Messenger of Allah that the consumption of dried meat was a common custom.

When the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Madīnah, Sa’d ibn ‘Ubādah is reported to have sent him different types of *tirid* every day, mostly meat *tirit*, but also with milk, vinegar, olive oil, or tallow.²⁹ His friend ‘Amr ibn Sālim presented Sa’d ibn ‘Ubādah with a flock of sheep that had reached the age of slaughter. He brought the sheep to the Prophet and told him that they were a gift from ‘Amr. The Prophet prayed for ‘Amr and ordered the sheep to be slaughtered and distributed among the Companions. He then divided all the sheep among the Companions.³⁰

The Prophet ﷺ did not eat meat and bread until he was full by himself. He would only be full when he ate with people.³¹ With 130 people on an expedition, the Prophet and his Companions ran out of food. Then they came across a flock of sheep. The Prophet asked owner of the flock if there were any sheep for sale. After receiving a positive response from the owner of the flock, the Prophet bought a sheep from him and asked him to cook its liver first. When the liver was cooked, he divided it among everyone. Those who were not present had their share. Then he divided the meat into two containers and everyone ate from those containers until they were satisfied. The amount of meat was said to even have increased a little.³²

²⁷ Fahrettin Atar, “Teşrik” (Istanbul: DİA, 2011), 575.

²⁸ Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muhammad ibn Sa’d ibn Manī’ al-Basrī al-Hāshimī Ibn Sa’d, *al-Tabaqāt al-Kubrā*, (Beyrūt, 1410), 1/21.

²⁹ Ibn Sa’d, *al-Tabaqāt*, 3/461.

³⁰ Muhammad ibn ‘Umar ibn Wākīd al-Wākīdī, *al-Maghāzī* (Beirut: Dāru’l-Alemī, 1409), 2/592.

³¹ Abū ‘Īsā Muhammad ibn ‘Īsā ibn Sawra al-Tirmidhī, *al-Shamā’il al-Muhammadiyah* (Beirut: Dāru lhyāi’ t-Turāsī’l-‘Arabī, 1993), 79.

³² Muhammad ibn Ismā’il al-Bukhārī, *al-Jamī’ al-Musnad al-Sahih al-Mukhtasar* (Beirut: Dāru Tavkī’n-Necāt, 1422), “al-At’imah”, 5.

In Hijaz society, meat was usually consumed with bread. For example, the Prophet ﷺ had a cauldron big enough for four people to carry. On Eid al-Adha, after the prayer, a dish made by chopping fried bread in meat broth (*therīd*) was brought which was full of food. Everyone gathered around the food. The Prophet ﷺ sat on his knees at the base of the cauldron. The other people who were present sat in the same way. The Prophet said, "Eat from the edges, but not from the middle, where the blessing descends."³³

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Bite the meat with your teeth, for it is more delicious and pleasant to eat in this way."³⁴ The Prophet loved meat from the forearm of a sheep. One day, a bowl of dish made by chopping fried bread in meat broth (*therīd*) and meat was placed in front of him. He took a piece of the meat from the forearm.³⁵

The Prophet ﷺ also ate the meat of wild animals from time to time. During the battle of Tabūk, when the army halted, some people wanted to eat meat. However, there was no meat among the food. Rāfi ibn Hadīj went to the Prophet and informed him that he had learned that hunting was possible in this area and that he wanted to go hunting. The Prophet told him not to go out alone but to take some people with him and to go out with their horses so that they would not fall behind the army. He went hunting with ten men, including Abū Katādah. Rafi was a good Bowman and Abū Katādah was a good spearman. During the day, Abū Katādah had killed five wild donkeys and Rāfi' had killed nearly 20 gazelles. The others shot two, three, or four gazelles each. They also hunted an ostrich. They returned at 'Isha' (the night prayer) time. When the Prophet ordered the prey to be divided among the Companions, it was distributed to everyone. The Prophet ordered the gazelle they had reserved for him to be cooked, and then called his guests to eat together. The

³³ Sulaymān ibn al-Ash'ath ibn Ishaq al-Azdī al-Sidjīstānī Abū Dā'ūd, *Kitāb al-Sunan* (Istanbul, 1413), "al-At'imah", 17.

³⁴ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 5/18; Abū Dā'ūd, *al-Sunan*, "al-At'imah", 20; Abū 'Īsā Muhammad ibn 'Īsā ibn Sawra al-Tirmidhī, *al-Jāmi' al-sahīh* (Istanbul, 1413), "al-At'imah", 32; Abū 'Abd Allāh Muhammad ibn Yazīd al-Raba'ī al-Kazwīnī Ibn Mādja, *Kitāb al-Sunan* (Istanbul, 1413), "al-At'imah", 27.

³⁵ Abū al-Husayn al-Qushayrī an-Nīsābūrī ibn Hajjāj Muslim, *al-Jāmi' al-sahīh* (Istanbul, 1413), "al-Īmān", 328.

Companions wanted to go hunting again the next day, but the Prophet did not give them permission for security reasons.³⁶

During the Farewell pilgrimage, the Prophet ﷺ slaughtered cattle as a sacrifice for his wives. 'Ā'isha said that on the day of Eid al-Adha during the pilgrimage, they were brought a lot of beef.³⁷ It is understood from this narration that one of the animals slaughtered in the sacrifice was cattle. In other narrations, the Prophet advised the Muslims to serve a wedding meal, even if it was only by slaughtering a sheep.³⁸ The expression “even if it is a sheep” in this narration suggests that mutton is less popular or preferred than other types of meat. In addition, since sheep are smaller than other sacrificial animals, less meat is obtained from them. Therefore, it is advised that it is appropriate to serve food at weddings, even in small quantities.

During the *Jahiliyyah* period, all donkey meat was eaten. However, on the day of the conquest of Khaybar, the Prophet forbade eating the meat of domestic donkeys.³⁹

The gecko, one of a widespread group of scaly reptile lizards, was eaten in the Arab world. Although the Prophet ﷺ himself did not eat the meat of the gecko, he permitted it to be eaten, declaring that it was not haram. Ibn 'Abbās and Khalid ibn Walid entered the presence of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the mother of the believers, Maimūna, who was the aunt of both of them. There was a fried meat which was being served in the meal. As the Prophet reached for it, he asked what meat he was reaching towards. He withdrew his hand when he was told that it was the meat of a lizard. When he was asked if the meat of the lizard was forbidden, the Prophet said, “No, it is not haram. You eat it. I am not used to this meat.”⁴⁰

³⁶ al-Wākidī, *al-Maghāzī*, 3/1035.

³⁷ Abū Muhammad 'Abd al-Malik Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya* (Egypt: Mektebetu Mustafā al-Bābī'l-Halabī, 1375), 2/601.

³⁸ al-Bukhārī, *Buhārī*, “al-Buyu”, 1.

³⁹ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 2/87.

⁴⁰ Muslim, *al-Jāmi' al-sahih*, “al-Sayd”, 43-47.

The Prophet ﷺ permitted the eating of locusts, but he himself declared that he did not like them.⁴¹ Therefore, it is seen that the Prophet made explanations about the types of meat that are forbidden to be eaten, as well as the types of meat that are not forbidden but which he himself does not want to eat, in order not to be misunderstood.

Abū Mūsā al-Ash'arī reported that he saw the Prophet ﷺ eating chicken meat.⁴² Ibn 'Umar is also reported to have eaten chicken and young chickens.⁴³ The Prophet is also reported to have eaten the meat of the hoopoe (Houbara/ Chlamydotis), an ash-colored, long-necked, swift-flying winged bird larger than a chicken and smaller than a goose.⁴⁴ It was mentioned by al-Wākidī that the Prophet and his Companions ate ostrich eggs without bread because they were unable to find bread.⁴⁵

The meat of wild rabbits was also eaten at that time. It is narrated that the Muslims were staying at a place called Merru'z-Zahrān near Makkah when a hare got scared and ran away. People ran after it, but when they could not catch it, they left it. Anas ibn Mālik ran and caught the rabbit and brought it to his stepfather Abū Talha. Abū Talha slaughtered the rabbit and sent the two legs to the Prophet. The Prophet accepted it.⁴⁶

Fish is the most common type of seafood and is rich in good quality protein, vitamins A, K, and B, and minerals, such as iodine, phosphorus, and zinc.⁴⁷ The Qur'anic verse mentions the halal nature of fishing and consumption of seafood (al-Mā'ida 5/96).

Fish were available in the coastal areas of Hijāz. According to a narration, the Prophet ﷺ sent about 300 men under the command of Abū Ubaydah ibn Jarrah in the Sīf al-Bahr (8/629), and when the army reached the coast, they ran out of food. Allah Almighty sent them an amberjack, the largest whale

⁴¹ Abū Dā'ūd, *al-Sunan*, "al-At'imah", 34.

⁴² al-Bukhārī, *Buhārī*, "Zebāih", 26.

⁴³ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 9/111.

⁴⁴ Abū Dā'ūd, *al-Sunan*, "al-At'imah", 29; al-Tirmidhī, *al-Tirmidhī*, "al-At'imah", 26.

⁴⁵ al-Wākidī, *al-Maghāzī*, 1/399.

⁴⁶ al-Bukhārī, *Buhārī*, "al-Zabā'ih", 32.

⁴⁷ Baysal, *Beslenme*, 248.

that washed ashore from the sea. The Companions has stayed on the coast of Sîf al-Bahr for 20 days and ate a lot of fish meat and oil, gained weight and their bodies became healthy. They dried some of the meat of the fish and took it with them and ate it on their way back to Madīnah. When they returned to Madīnah and told the Prophet about the situation, he said, "It is a sustenance that sent to you by Allah."⁴⁸

2. Milk

Milk consists of water, fat, protein, carbohydrates, minerals, and vitamins. These amounts may vary according to the type of animal from which the milk is taken, the seasons, and the diet of the animal.⁴⁹ Milk is a nutritious drink found in many types of animals and humans. While the overall nutrients in milk vary depending on the type of milk, it generally contains high-quality protein and different fats. Lactose, a type of carbohydrate, makes up 5% of milk and is difficult for humans to digest.⁵⁰ Although milk is a liquid food, its dry matter content is close to that of some other solid foods.⁵¹ Minerals in milk include: calcium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium, chlorine, magnesium, and sulphur. Vitamins found in milk include vitamins A, D, E, K, and B.⁵²

The fact that breast milk is the only food given to newborn babies in the first six months of life shows that it contains all the needed nutrients in appropriate amounts.⁵³ Breast milk is a food that contains all the necessary nutrients for the baby, contains many complex proteins, lipids, and carbohydrates in varying proportions according to the mother's diet, protects against diseases, and improves the immune system and intestinal microbiota.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Ibn Hishām, *al-Sirat al-Nabawiyya*, 2/632; Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 2/100.

⁴⁹ Baysal, *Beslenme*, 260.

⁵⁰ Zekeriya Aktürk ve M. Sadi Çögenli, *Tıbbi Litaratür Açıklamalı Kur'an'da Adı Geçen Besinler ve Sosyal Sağlık*, I (Erzurum: Zafer Yayınevi, 2021), 158.

⁵¹ Canbaş, *Gıda Bilimi ve Teknolojisi*, 181.

⁵² Gülderen Oysun, *Süt Kimyası ve Biyokimyası* (Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi Ziraat Fakültesi, 1987), 95-102; 109-18.

⁵³ Canbaş, *Gıda Bilimi ve Teknolojisi*, 181.

⁵⁴ Aktürk ve Çögenli, *Tıbbi Litaratür Açıklamalı Kur'an'da Adı Geçen Besinler ve Sosyal Sağlık*, 155.

In the Holy Qur'an, it is stated that Allah created milk as a form of food for human beings through animals, and people are invited to think about this blessing and are asked to be grateful. In verse 66 of Surah Nahl, people are invited to think by drawing attention to the milk-giving properties of animals, called milking animals, such as sheep, goats, cattle, and camels, which provide milk that benefits those who drink it. According to one interpretation of this verse, milk is produced by excreting nutrients that enter the bloodstream that are not used for another bodily function.⁵⁵ Verse 21 of Sūrat al-Mu'minūn mentions the milk, meat, and other benefits of milking animals.⁵⁶ In Surah Yāsin, verse 73, people are asked to give thanks to Allah by thinking of the blessings and milk in these animals that were created for the benefit of humans.⁵⁷

The consumption of milk as a food is thought to have begun eight to ten thousand years ago with the domestication of cattle in Central Asia. Although sources indicate that Indians knew the value of milk 6,000 years ago, the sacredness attributed to the cow in India may be related to the value they placed on milk.⁵⁸

Milk and dairy products have been one of the basic nutrients in human nutrition. Dairy products, which are not missing from the tables because they are both nutritious and satisfying, are an important part of the eating and drinking culture.⁵⁹ In the works of al-Wākidī and Ibn Hishām, two of the first period biographical (*siyar*) sources, the following narration is mentioned: During the *Jahiliyyah* period, the Quraysh found some writings in Syriac in the corner of the *Ka'ba*. They asked a Jew about the meaning of these writings. They learned that it means "I am Allah, the owner of Makkah... the people of Makkah are blessed with water and milk."⁶⁰ One of the narrations among the spiritual representations of milk is the narration that the Prophet ﷺ preferred

⁵⁵ *Kur'an Yolu Tefsiri*, 3/415-416.

⁵⁶ *Kur'an Yolu Tefsiri*, 4/18.

⁵⁷ *Kur'an Yolu Tefsiri*, 4/512-513.

⁵⁸ Oysun, *Süt Kimyası ve Biyokimyası*, 1.

⁵⁹ Akgün - Öztürk, "Erken Dönem İslâm Toplumunda Bir Besin Maddesi Olarak Süt", 1.

⁶⁰ Abū 'Abdullāh Muhammad ibn Ishāk ibn Yathār al-Muttalibi Ibn Ishāk, *al-Sira* (Beirut: Dāru'l-Fikr, 1398), 1/106; Ibn Hishām, *al-Sirat al-Nabawiyya*, 1/196.

milk among the drinks offered to him during the Mi'rāj and that this was an accurate choice and in accordance with fitrah (the natural predisposition of man).⁶¹

One day, the Prophet ﷺ was offered milk. After drinking the milk, he said: "Whoever Allah grants a meal, let him pray: 'O Allah, make it bountiful for us and grant us something better than this.' And whoever Allah grants to drink milk, let him say, 'O Allah, make it bountiful for us and grant us more milk. Because no food or drink other than milk can replace it.'"⁶² This narration emphasizes the importance of milk. While one might think they can always find better food, there is no better food than milk, so the advice is to ask for more of it. As an example of the effect of religion on the quantity of food, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is reported to have offered milk to a non-believing guest. While the guest was able to drink seven bowls of milk in a row, one bowl of milk became enough for him after he became a Muslim the next day. In explaining this, the Messenger of Allah said, "The believer eats in one stomach, and the disbeliever eats in seven stomachs."⁶³ In fact, with these statements, which emphasize the austerity of Muslims, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ also advises believers to not be greedy and covetous of food and to be content with a sufficient amount.

The Prophet ﷺ said that there is healing in milk and advised, "Drink cow's milk, for cows graze on every kind of plant."⁶⁴ Some hadith narrations state that cow meat contains disease. Hadith commentators consider the reports of disease in cow meat as a quarantine against a temporary epidemic in cattle due to climatic conditions.⁶⁵

When the Prophet's ﷺ son Ibrahim was sick, he allocated camel and sheep's milk to ensure that his son was well-fed. After which, Ibrahim's health

⁶¹ Ibn Hishām, *al-Sīrat al-Nabawīyya*, 1/397-398; al-Bukhārī, *Buhārī*, "al-Anbiyā", 50.

⁶² Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad* (Istanbul: Çağrı Yayınları, 1413), 1/225.

⁶³ Muslim, *al-Jāmi' al-Sahīh*, "al-Ashribah", 186 .

⁶⁴ Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad*, 4/315.

⁶⁵ 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Munāwī, *Fayz al-Kadīr sharh al-Jāmi' al-sağīr* (Beirut: Dāru'l-Kütübī'l-İlmiyye, 1415), 4/458.

began to improve.⁶⁶

The importance of breast milk for the healthy development of babies has been recognized throughout history. From the related narratives, it is clear that during the pre-Islamic (*jāhiliyyah*) period, it was tradition to give newborn babies to wetnurses.⁶⁷ The residents of Makkah used to give children to a wetnurse to make them healthier. The Prophet ﷺ was also given to a wet nurse, of which, he even had more than one.⁶⁸

Some dairy products were also available during the Prophet's ﷺ time. For example, Umm Sulaym offered him a dish called *haysah*, which was made with dried yogurt, dates, and oil.⁶⁹ During the expedition of Tabūk, a piece of cheese was brought to the Prophet. He asked for a knife, said the *basmalah* (in the name of Allah and cut the cheese).⁷⁰ In fact, this is related to the Prophet's attitude towards eating. The Prophet advised to start eating with the *basmalah* as in other matters.

3. Oil

It can be said that olive oil was the most consumed oil type as a foodstuff during the Prophet's time. Apart from its use as a foodstuff, there are also narrations that some other types of oil were used for treatment and lightening purposes. Olive is a plant originating from South Asia. The Samaritans, who lived in the homeland of the plant, improved the olive garden early and turned it into a productive cultivated plant. According to passages in the Old Testament, olive oil has general uses, such as cooking, sacrificial ceremonies, lamp fuel, hair polishing, and body rubs. The olive tree thrives in maritime climates and calcareous soils. Therefore it grew on the Aegean coast of Anatolia, on the islands, and in Greece. It has attracted the attention of the public and the writers of epic sagas because it does not shed its leaves in the winter, has incredible longevity, is nearly indestructible, and has a brilliance not

⁶⁶ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 1/109; *Hadislerle İslam* (Ankara: T.C. Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı, 2013), 6/505.

⁶⁷ Osman Kaşıkçı, "Radā" (İstanbul, 2007).

⁶⁸ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 1/87-92.

⁶⁹ al-Bukhārī, *Buhārī*, "al-Nikah", 65.

⁷⁰ Abū Dā'ūd, *al-Sunan*, "al-At'imah", 38.

found in other plants.⁷¹ In terms of the nutritional values of olives, 100 grams contain 81.3 grams water, 9.54 grams fat, 6.06 grams carbohydrates, 0.88 grams protein, 3 grams Fiber, and many other nutrients beneficial for human health, such as calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, and vitamin C.⁷²

In the Holy Qur'an, olives are directly mentioned by name in six places (al-An'ām 6/99, al-Nahl 16/ 10-11, 'Abasa 80/29, al-Tīn 95/1). In four of these verses, it is mentioned as one of the blessings that Allah Almighty plants from the earth. Surah Nur states that the olive tree is a holy tree (al-Nūr 24/35). In Surat al-Tīn, olives are mentioned together with figs (al-Tīn 95/1) and these two types of food are sworn. A possible interpretation of this is that the nutritional properties of figs and olives were sworn by Allah, while another interpretation is that Allah was referring to the regions where He had previously sent revelation.⁷³ It is thought that the tree mentioned in the verse, "And with that water We created a tree (olive tree) that grows on Mount Sīna, which gives both oil and food for those who eat it," is an olive tree because they grow in the region where the mountain is mentioned in the verse and this tree provides oil and food for those who eat it.⁷⁴

The olive tree that grew in the Damascus region did not grow in the Hijāz region. The Arabs of Hijāz had close relations with Damascus both in the *Jahiliyya* period and during the Islamic era. Olive oil was an important part in their regular trade relations. News about Damascus reached Hijaz almost every day, as people traveled back and forth for trade.⁷⁵ Olive oil was also eaten as a condiment with bread at meals. Abū Hurayrah reported that the Prophet was never full of bread and olive oil twice in one day.⁷⁶ This narration points to the use of olive oil as a food. When there was no meat to add to the bread, a

⁷¹ Victor Hehn, *Zeytin, Üzüm ve İncir: Kültür Tarihi Eskizleri* (Ankara: Dost Kitabevi, 1998), 73, 74.

⁷² Aktürk ve Çögenli, *Tıbbi Litaratür Açıklamalı Kur'an'da Adı Geçen Besinler ve Sosyal Sağlık*, 192.

⁷³ Abdülhamit Birışık, "Tīn Suresi" (İstanbul, 2012).

⁷⁴ *el-Mü'minûn* 23/ 20, erişim 14 Eylül 2023,

<https://kuran.diyaret.gov.tr/tefsir/M%C3%BC'min%C3%BBn-suresi/2691/18-20-ayet-tefsiri>.

⁷⁵ al-Wākidi, *al-Maghāzī*, 3/989-990.

⁷⁶ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 1/309.

bread *therīd* was made with olive oil.⁷⁷ Arabs used to heat (fry) olive oil.⁷⁸ After the Hijrah, among the dishes served to the Prophet by Sa'd ibn 'Ubādah was *therīd* with olive oil.⁷⁹

It is also narrated that olive oil is used for cosmetic purposes. For example, it was used for hair and skin care. It is narrated that the Prophet himself applied olive oil on his head, body and recommended eating olive oil as a condiment and being anointed with it.⁸⁰ Oils could also be used for therapeutic purposes. The Messenger of Allah used to drip sesame oil into his nose.⁸¹ In authentic narrations, the Prophet ﷺ declared that black cumin (*Nigella Sativa*) contains healing properties. In one of his hadiths, he said: "Verily, in this black cumin (*al-habbah al-sawdā'*) there is a cure for every disease except death." According to a narration by al-Tabarī and al-Tabarānī, which is considered weak by hadith scholars, the King of Rum presented the Prophet with a jar of ginger which he divided among his Companions.⁸²

It is understood from the narrations that oils were used for lighting purposes. Maimonah made a vow to pray at al-Aqsā Mosque if Makkah was conquered. The Prophet ﷺ said that although she could not afford to go to al-Aqsā, if she sent olive oil on her behalf to enlighten the mosque, she would be considered as having gone there.⁸³

4. Water

Water is the most important element for living organisms after oxygen. Water constitutes two-thirds of the human body and is composed of two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen.⁸⁴ All plants and animals need water to sur-

⁷⁷ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 3/237.

⁷⁸ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 3/241.

⁷⁹ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 3/461.

⁸⁰ Ebū Ya'kūb Ishāk ibn İbrāhīm al-Marwazī Ishāk ibn Rāhawayh, *Musnedu İshāk ibn Rāheveyh* (Kahire: Dāru't-Te'sil, 1437), 1/387.

⁸¹ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, I, 346.

⁸² Ebū'l-Kāsim Suleymān ibn Ahmed eş-Şāmī al-Tabarānī, *al-Mu'cam al-Avsat* (Kahire: Dāru'l-Haremeyn, t.y.), 3/43; Ebū Ca'fer Muhammed ibn Cerir ibn Yezid al-Amilī al-Tabarī, *Tahzibu'l-Āsār* (Kahire: Matba'a al-Madanī, t.y.), 212.

⁸³ al-Wākidī, *al-Maghāzī*, 2/866.

⁸⁴ Türker, *Gıda Sözlüğü*, 146.

vive.⁸⁵ It is essential for life, performing functions such as digesting nutrients, transporting them to the tissues, and removing heat generated in the body.⁸⁶

Water is mentioned in many verses in the Holy Qur'an. These verses generally indicate that water is present in everything that has life (al-Anbiyā' 21/30), that every living thing was created from water (al-Nūr 24/45), that food grows from rain (al-Bakara 2/22), and that man was created from a drop of water (al-Furkân 25/54).

In the pre-Islamic period, the duty of distributing water, called *sikāye*, was a prestigious duty among the Quraysh. Kusay, who institutionalized the duty of distributing water to pilgrims, was the fourth-generation grandfather of the Prophet. The desire to perform this honorable duty continued after Islam. The Prophet's grandfather Adulmuttalib and his uncles, Abū Tālib and 'Abbās, continued to perform this duty. Abbās served sweet water to the pilgrims by adding grapes brought from Tāif to the Zamzam.⁸⁷ It is said that Ali had hoped that after the conquest of Makkah, he would be entrusted with a position as prestigious as the *Sikāyah*.⁸⁸

Zamzam is one of the types of water consumed by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in Makkah and is a beverage which contains various minerals. Zamzam is drawn from a well located 19 meters beneath the *Ka'ba*. Zamzam was more abundant, cleaner, and tastier than the other springs in Makkah.⁸⁹ First found by Hagar, Zamzam disappeared over time before it was found again by Adulmuttalib, the Prophet's grandfather.⁹⁰ In the early years of Islam, Abū Zerr, who had heard about the Prophet, came to Makkah to see him. When the Messenger of Allah asked him what he ate and drank, he said that he had found no food for ten days except Zamzam. He even said that this water

⁸⁵ Aktürk ve Çögenli, *Tıbbi Litaratür Açıklamalı Kur'an'da Adı Geçen Besinler ve Sosyal Sağlık*, 150.

⁸⁶ Baysal, *Beslenme Kültürümüz*, 9.

⁸⁷ Mustafa Sabri Küçükaşçı, "Sikāye", içinde *TDV İslam Ansiklopedisi*, 2009.

⁸⁸ Abu Bakr Ibn Abi Shayba, *Kitāb al-Meğāzī: Hz. Peygamber ve Dört Halife*, çev. Ramazan Önal ve Ahmet Şen (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2019), 161.

⁸⁹ Mustafa Sabri Küçükaşçı, "Zemzem", içinde *TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, 2013.

⁹⁰ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 1/67-68.

made him fat and that he did not feel hungry. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said about the nutritiousness of Zamzam water, "This water is blessed and it is a nutritious food."⁹¹

According to Umm Ayman, one of the examples of Zamzam being both water and food is that the Prophet used to start the day by drinking Zamzam in the morning and did not need any other food until later in the day.⁹² Moreover, in the house of Umm Hāni, the daughter of Abū Tālib, the jar of Zamzam became famous as "the one who feeds the hungry."⁹³ These events reveal that Zamzam was not only seen as more than just water, but also noted for its nutritious benefits. Since the time of Abdulmuttalib, Zamzam flavored with dates and grapes was offered to pilgrims. It was also served with milk flavored with honey.⁹⁴

The Prophet ﷺ also drank from other fresh water sources. Therefore, the demand for good quality water is a human trait. Among the well that the Prophet drank from include: the well of Budā'a, the well of Abū Anas, the water of the well near the pavilion of Banī Hudayla, the well of Jāsim, the well of Buyūtussukyā, the well of Gars, the well of al-Abīra, which the Prophet called al-Yasīra, the well of Rūma, and the well of Muzanī.⁹⁵

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ advised drinking water in the name of Allah, in three breaths, and while sitting down.⁹⁶

⁹¹ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 4/167.

⁹² Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 1/133.

⁹³ Ebū 'Abdullāh Muhammad ibn Ishāk al-Makkī al-Fākīhī, *Ahbāru Makka fī kadīm al-Dahr ve Hadīsih* (Beirut: Dāru Hadar, 1414), 2/46.

⁹⁴ Ebū'l-Velīd Muhammed ibn 'Abdullāh al-Ġassānī al-Ezrakī, *Ahbāru Makka wa mā Cāa fihā min al-Āsār* (Beirut: Dāru'l-Endelus, 1403), 1/113-114.

⁹⁵ Ibn Sa'd, *al-Tabaqāt*, 1/390-393.

⁹⁶ Abū Dā'ūd, *al-Sunan*, "al-Ashribah", 19; Muslim, *al-Jāmi' al-Sahīh*, "al-Ashribah", 123.

Table: Some Protein-, Fat-, and Water-Based Foods in The Prophet Muhammad’s ﷺ Diet

Basic Nutrients	Examples of food types	Types of nutrients
Some Proteins	Meat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheep meat (mutton) • The forearm of a sheep • Beef meat • Camel meat • The meat of the wild animals: wild donkeys, gazelles, ostrich • Chicken meat • The hoopoe (houbara/chlamydotis) • The rabbit meat • Fish meat • Meat broth (<i>therīd</i>) • Ostrich eggs
	Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cow’s milk • Camel’s milk • Sheep’s milk • Breast milk • <i>Haysah</i>, which was made with dried yogurt, dates, and oil • Cheese
Some Oils	Olive oil Black cumin (<i>nigella sativa</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A <i>therīd</i> was made with olive oil • Tallow • Black cumin • Sesame oil • Fish oil
Some Waters	Zamzam and other fresh water sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zamzam <p>Fresh water sources:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The well of Budā'a, • The well of Abū Anas, • The well near the pavilion of Banī Hudayla, • The well of Jāsim, • The well of Buyūt al-sukyā, • The well of Gars, • The well of al-Abīra, • Which the Prophet called al-Yasīra, • The well of Rūma, • The well of Muzanī
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Conclusion

Protein, fat, and water are the building blocks of food. The Prophet ﷺ did not select and consume foods for nutrition in an environment where food was abundant and varied. The foods that were commonly consumed at that time were preferred in the ordinary course of life, while respecting the limits set by religion. During the time of the Messenger of Allah, meat and meat-based dishes were among the most popular foods. Camels, cattle, oxen, wild animals, domestic winged birds, and fish were common items in the diet. *Tirit*, one of the dishes made with meat, was a favorite dish of the time. The Prophet, who forbade the eating of some types of meat, stated that he did not like to eat some animals, even though they were not forbidden.

Milk is one of the foods consumed for protein. Milk contains water, fat, protein, carbohydrates, minerals, and vitamins. Mother's milk is an irreplaceable food in the nutrition of children. The Prophet ﷺ spoke about the material and spiritual value of milk. Some dishes made of milk products were served to him during his life. In addition, his choice of milk during his miraculous Night Journey was praised for falling within the proper disposition of man.

Fats, one of the building blocks of food, are the body's energy stores. Olive oil has attracted attention in history because of its longevity and resistance to destruction, its vitality, and the brightness of products derived from it. Ol-

ive oil contains water, oil, carbohydrates, protein, fiber, calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, vitamin C, and many other nutrients beneficial to human health. It has been stated that olive oil was brought to the Hijaz by commercial means and that the Prophet ﷺ consumed it as an additive to bread and in the form of *tirit*. Olive oil was also used for cosmetic purposes by the Prophet and his community.

Water, one of the building blocks of food, is present in all foods in varying proportions. Water is essential for sustaining life, digesting nutrients, and transporting nutrients to the tissues. As water was highly valued, serving it to pilgrims in Makkah was seen as a prestigious duty. The Prophet drank Zamzam water and mentioned the nutritiousness of this water. The Prophet also drank water from fresh water sources in Madīnah, using this water for both ablution and nutrition.

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