

# BLESSED FOOD

The Authenticity of Offering Food for the Reward of Others

The Authenticity of Reciting Quran or Dua over Food

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## INTRODUCTION

Muslims prepare and distribute food for the *eesaal e sawaab* (reward) of the deceased. Often Quranic verses or dua are also recited over all or some of this food.

Amongst Muslims of Sub-continental heritage such food is distributed on occasions of *eesaal e sawaab* known locally as Khatam; Urs; Gyaarveen and Milaad. Consequently this food becomes known as the food of Khatam; Gyaarveen; Urs or Milaad. Irrespective of the name, this food has two basic characteristics:

- 1) It is prepared and distributed on behalf of others and labelled as such, e.g. it is said 'this is for the reward of a relative or Ghous ul Aazam Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilaani or for the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam*
- 2) Before food is distributed or consumed Quranic verses or dua are often recited over it.

Note that both these characteristics are independent, there is food that is distributed for *eesaal e sawaab* that does not have anything recited over it and there is food that has words recited over it but is not for *eesaal e sawaab*.

Unfortunately some of our naïve friends doubt the legitimacy of this food. Some go as far as vehemently claiming such food to be haraam and worse than pork (Na Aozu billah). Not only do they refrain from this food but actively despise it!

This booklet shall prove that such food is blessed and these practices authentic and the claim that such food is haraam is a violent excess by demonstrating:

- The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* sacrificed animals for others
- The Companions offered sacrifice for others
- The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* recited Dua & Words over food

### Food given on behalf of others

*e.g the deceased, Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilaani or the Prophet*

Muslims regularly distribute food on behalf of others, such as deceased relatives or holy people, in the hope that Allah Ta'aala will reward the deceased or holy people for this food.

Often this act of distributing food is given local names based on the occasion or person on behalf of whom it is distributed. For example food distributed for the reward of Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilaani is known in the Sub Continent as Gyaarveen and food distributed for relatives is often labelled as Khatam.

Some naïve friends suggest that such food is unlawful because it is offered for someone other than Allah. They claim the verse

'And (is unlawful) that on which is slaughtered on any other name other than Allah'

*(Al Baqarah 173)*

prohibits such food because this is food for our deceased parents or for Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilaani or for the Prophet. It is haraam simply because it is not for Allah!

Apart from the obvious fact that this verse only refers to slaughtered animals (and distributed food is not always meat!) these people also fail to understand that when it is said 'this food is for such people' it means that it is for their reward and not for their worship! When we distribute food we hope and expect Allah Ta'aala to reward them for such food. This concept is similar to offering monetary sadaqah on behalf of others, we expect Allah to reward the deceased for our donation. So what is the difference between offering sadaqah in the form of money or as food? Absolutely none!

We will quote authentic examples showing that the practice of slaughtering animals and offering food on behalf of others and

labelling it as 'for so and so' is Sunnah and the practice of our pious predecessors.

### This sacrifice is on behalf of My Ummah

Remind yourselves of the famous incident of our Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* slaughtering an animal in the name of Allah and declaring it 'This is for my Ummah'

Syeda Aisha narrates that the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* called for a horned goat that had two black feet, a black stomach and black eyes, in other words it should be black from head to toe. He said 'Aisha, bring a knife and sharpen it on this stone'. Syeda Aisha did so. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* took the knife and the goat, lay it down, sacrificed it and said 'With the Name of Allah accept it from Muhammad and the Ummah of Muhammad' and slaughtered it' (*Sahih Muslim*)

This is authentic evidence for offering food on behalf of relatives and holy people because does the Ummah, for whom the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* offered this animal, not include our deceased relatives or Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilaani? So why the objections when we offer food for them?! And why do our naive friends see this food in such contempt. Do they also view this offering of the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* with the same contempt? If not, why not, for what is the difference? In another narration,

Syeduna Jaabir narrates that on the day of sacrifice the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* sacrificed two beautiful horned goats. When he lay them down he recited some verses and said 'Oh Allah, this is from You and is for You from Muhammad and his Ummah, With the name of Allah, Allah u Akbar and then slaughtered it' (*Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Ibn Majah and Daarimi*)

### Syeduna Ali slaughtered animals on behalf of the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam*

Anash narrates that he saw Syeduna Ali sacrificing two goats and asked 'What is this?' Syeduna Ali replied 'The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* bequeathed me to sacrifice on his behalf so I sacrifice on his behalf' (Abu Dawud)

Would the meat of the animal sacrificed on behalf of the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wa aalihi wasallam*, have been eaten or wasted? Surely it would have been eaten, so if the companions were prepared to eat meat sacrificed on behalf of the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* what objections do people have to eating meat sacrificed on behalf of the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* on Milaad or for the Awliyaa on Khatam or Gyaarveen?!

### Hanafi Fiqh Ruling

It is in the famous Hanafi book 'Radd ul Mukhtaar'

'If someone sacrifices on behalf of a deceased it is permissible to eat it because it is actually from the property of the sacrificer and (only) the reward belongs to the deceased'

### A Companion declared 'This well is for my mother'

Those who claim that labelling food for others is wrong should also look at the statement of the famous companion Saad bin Ubaada. He dug a well and explicitly labelled it for his mother.

Saad bin Ubaada narrates that he asked the Prophet 'Yaa Rasoolallah *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam*, Umm e Saad has passed away. Which is the best sadaqa?' The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* replied 'Water' so he prepared a well and declared 'This is for the mother of Saad'  
(Abu Dawud; Nisai; Musnad Ahmad; Ibn Asaakir)

If the Sahaaba labelled food items for others why can we not label food for our deceased relatives?! Surely the companions - both rich and poor - drank from the well that was labelled for the mother of Saad. So if such food is good enough for the companions why is it apparently not good enough for those who claim to follow the pious predecessors (Salaf)?! Do they better understand the Deen than the companions?!

### Even Animals labelled with the name of idols are not haraam

Those who claim that items labelled or known by the names of others are haraam should look closely at the Quranic verse in which animals named after idols are shown to be halaal.

During the time of the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* the idolaters of Makkah would offer animals to their idols and let them roam free. They would name these animals after their idols such as Baheera, Saaiba, waseela and Haam. Because of these names and offerings some Muslims assumed these animals were unlawful. However their assumption was mistaken and Allah revealed

It was not Allah who made (haraam) Baheera, Saaiba, Waseela and Haam, It is disbelievers who invent a lie against Allah?  
(Al Maaida 103)

So if animals named after (but not slaughtered for) idols are not haraam how can animals slaughtered in the name of Allah and in reward of Muslims be unlawful and unfit for consumption?!

### Reciting Quranic Verses or Dua over food

Muslims not only recite verses or Dua over the food of *eesaal e sawaab* but also do during invitations, waleema and even ordinary meals! However some misinformed friends claim it is an innovation and wrong to recite Quranic verses or dua over food and strictly refrain from eating such food.

Such people appear oblivious to the practice of the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* and his companions. Praise be to Allah, reciting Quran or dua over food is an established practice of the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam*. Take a look at some authentic examples:

#### The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* recited over food whatever Allah wished him to recite

Anas bin Malik narrates “Abu Talha said to Umm e Saleem ‘I heard the voice of the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam*, it sounded weak and I came to know that he was hungry. Do you have anything?’ She said ‘Yes’ and took out some bread and folded it into the corner of a piece of cloth and tied it around me and sent me towards the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* ‘So I went to the Prophet and found him in the mosque sat with many other people. I stood there and the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* addressed me ‘Has Abu Talha sent you’. I replied ‘Yes’. He then asked ‘With food?’ I again replied ‘Yes’. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* ordered everyone around him ‘Stand (Let us go)’ and they all departed and I ran ahead of them and informed Abu Talha who turned to Umm Saleem ‘Other people are also coming with the Prophet and we don’t have anything’. Umm e Saleem consoled ‘Allah and his Prophet know best’ Anas narrates that Abu Talha welcomed the Prophet and both of them entered the house. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* ordered ‘O Umm e Saleem, bring forth whatever you have’. So she presented him with the same pieces of bread. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* ordered the bread to be broken up. Umm e Saleem buttered the pieces and the Prophet then recited whatever Allah wished him to recite and called for ten people. They came and ate to their fill and left. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* then called for more people. They came, ate to their fill and departed. He then called for another ten people and they came, ate to their fill and departed. In

other words all the people ate to their fill and they were some 70 or 80 people.’(Sunan Tirmidhi, similar in Bukhaari, Muslim)  
The important sentence in this hadith for our discussion is

‘The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* then recited whatever Allah wished him to recite’.

What do you think the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* would have recited? Poetry, Stories or Worldly talk? We know that it could have been nothing except the Book of Allah or a Dua for the Prophet does not speak except without inspiration.

Sweet was presented before the Prophet, he placed his blessed hand over it and recited’ (Bukhaari & Muslim)

Syeduna Jaabir narrates that during the battle of the Trench he slaughtered a goat in invitation of the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* and prepared one Sah (i.e. 2.4kg) of flour and discretely invited the Prophet with a few other people. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* gathered all the Ahl ul Khandaq, some one thousand, and brought them along and ordered Jaabir not to touch the cooking pot or the flour until he arrived. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* later arrived and put his blessed saliva in both the knead dough and the cooking pot and performed dua and ordered ‘Call another woman to cook and keep taking soup out of the pot but do not take it off the fire’. Jabir states ‘There were 1000 people, by Allah, all of them ate but our cooking pot and flour appeared untouched.’ (Sahihain as quoted by Ashraf Ali Taanvi in Nashr ut Teeb)

Furthermore the companions would bring food and ask the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* to recite over it.

‘Syeduna Abu Hurayra states ‘I placed a few dried dates before the Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* and pleaded ‘Perform the dua of barakah for these dried dates’. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* gathered the dates together and performed a dua

over them and ordered ‘Take them and put them in your waist pouch and whenever you wish put your hand in and take out but never shake them’. Syeduna Abu Hurayra states ‘There was so much barakah in those dried dates that I gave many wisq (one wisq is of 60 Sahs and one Sah is about 2.4kg) in the path of Allah and always fed myself and others from it. The pouch stayed tied to my waist until the day of Uthmaan’s martyrdom (some 30 years later) when it was cut away and lost’. (*Tirmidhi as quoted by Ashraf Ali Taanvi in Nashr ut Teeb*)

This shows that Syeduna Abu Hurayra ate and distributed food over which Dua had been performed! So who is following the way of the Sahaabah? Those who perform dua over food or those who don’t?!

As mentioned earlier some of our friends have adopted the sad practice of refusing food that has had the Quran or Dua recited over it. Maybe they need reminding that it is the sunnah of the devil to refuse to eat and digest food over which words of Allah have been recited. Our dear brothers should repent from it.

The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* was sat with a man eating who had not recited the name of Allah until only one bite was left when he remembered and recited with the last bite ‘With the name of Allah at the beginning and the end’. The Prophet *sallallaahu alaihi wasallam* laughed and explained ‘The devil was eating with you until you mentioned the name of Allah, after which he vomited all that was in his stomach’ (*Abu Dawud*)

*May Allah Ta’aala allow us to follow in the footsteps of those He favoured.*

*Aameen*

*Bi Jaai Syedil Mursileen Al Faatiha*