



# WASTING FOOD

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# Wasting Food

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Question: What's the ruling on knowingly throwing away food, even if it's a little? What about grains of rice that may remain on the plate and are put into the sink? Is it Harām if it's done knowingly?

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Never throw food away in the garbage, the waste basket, or down the drain, because that's a form of disrespect to a blessing from Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, and disrespecting food in such a manner is being ungrateful to the Ni'am of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, and Allāh سبحانه وتعالى punishes those who abuse his Ni'am. The Messenger ﷺ was so eager to preserve every tiny particle of food that he would lick his three fingers after he ate.

كَانَ إِذَا أَكَلَ طَعَامًا لَعِقَ أَصَابِعَهُ الثَّلَاثَ

*When Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) ate food, he licked his three fingers...<sup>1</sup>*

In the same Hadīth, he said if one drops a Luqmah, which is a bite of food — he's trying to eat, he drops a bite of food — he said he should remove any filth that got on it and then he should eat it. He should not leave it for the Shaytān.

إِذَا سَقَطَتْ لُقْمَةٌ أَحَدِكُمْ فَلْيُمِطْ عَنْهَا الْأَذَى وَلْيَأْكُلْهَا وَلَا يَدْعُهَا لِلشَّيْطَانِ

*When any one of you drops a mouthful, he should remove anything filthy from it and then eat it, and should not leave it for the Shaytān.*

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<sup>1</sup> Muslim: 2034

In the same Hadīth, he also commanded that we should wipe the dish. He said you don't know in what portion of your food the Barakah is in, so you can eat every last drop of rice,

وَأَمَرْنَا أَنْ نَسْلُتَ الْقِصْعَةَ قَالَ " فَإِنَّكُمْ لَا تَدْرُونَ فِي أَيِّ طَعَامِكُمُ الْبَرَكَةُ

*He also commanded us that we should wipe the dish saying: You do not know in what portion of your food the blessing lies.*

How much sticks on three fingers? A little bit of grease, and a few grains of rice possibly. How big is the bite that falls down? It's a tiny bite. It's a bite! How much remains on a plate when one is done? Barely anything. That's how the Messenger ﷺ taught us to respect, honor, and cherish blessings — blessings many are deprived of.

Honoring a blessing is a method of thanking Allāh سبحانه وتعالى. The Shukr of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى is not just verbal, "Alhamdulillah, Alhamdulillah". Saying Alhamdulillah one hundred times is not the only form of Shukr. It's not only saying "Bismillāh" when you start eating and "Alhamdulillah" when you're done and it's over. It's preserving the blessing that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى grants you, the blessing that Allāh سبحانه وتعالى grants you to gain strength and nourishment, while at the same time, it's pleasurable while you consume it. One should never make it a habit to overcook.

وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

*And eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess.*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> [7:31]

Allāh doesn't love those who are wasteful. That's for someone who's wasting — wasting! Cooking excessive amounts of food habitually, or on special occasions like weddings or when one has guests, and then throwing it away is destroying wealth. That's worse than *Isrāf*! When there's extra food — and that should *randomly* happen — if there happens to be extra food, one can humble himself and eat some leftover food. Or they can give it to someone in need because the Messenger ﷺ said,

ومن كان له فضل من زاد فليعد به على من لا زاد له

*Whoever has surplus food should give it to him who has nothing.*<sup>3</sup>

If it's no longer edible, accumulate it in the freezer. There's a little bit of rice here and there, accumulate it in the the freezer or the refrigerator, and when you have time, take it to a respectful place — not the trash — so that the birds and the animals can benefit from it. No one is better than the Messenger ﷺ, who was very firm on this matter. He was so firm, that he once found a date on the floor and he said,

لَوْلَا أَن تَكُونَ صَدَقَةً لَأَكَلْتُهَا

*Were it not (that I fear) it may be part of Sadaqah, I would have eaten it.*<sup>4</sup>

RasūlAllāh ﷺ! He finds a date on the floor and he says, “*If I didn't fear it was a Sadaqah, I would have eaten it.*” A date on the floor. If anyone ever wonders why he has great income coming in, but he's living paycheck to paycheck with no

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<sup>3</sup> Muslim: 1728

<sup>4</sup> Muslim: 1071

Barakah in his income or in his life, and at the same time, he's wasting or throwing grains of rice or crumbs of bread or what's less or more than that, then it may be that's why Allāh سبحانه وتعالى stripped the Barakah out of his life. It's Kufr in Ni'mah to do so, being ungrateful to the Ni'am of Allāh سبحانه وتعالى, and Allāh سبحانه وتعالى said,

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ<sup>ط</sup> وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ

*And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, 'If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favor]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe.'*

If you're grateful, I'll increase you, but if you disbelieve, if you're ungrateful, my punishment is severe. Kufr of Ni'am is being ungrateful.

إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ

*Indeed, My punishment is severe.*<sup>5</sup>

My punishment is severe. Meaning, you'll be stripped of those blessings. And you'll be punished, والعياذ بالله. You'll be punished. Why? For being ungrateful. It results in Allāh سبحانه وتعالى taking the blessing out of one's life. Especially when there are masses who would wish to have the leftovers to satisfy their hunger. Look at the people of Gaza. Look at the risk they take just to go out and get a bite or two for themselves and their loved ones. It's not extreme when we talk about a few grains of rice, when yesterday, we saw children from Gaza collecting grains of rice from in between grass and dirt that the humanitarian aid accidentally dropped. They make Sujūd Ash-Shukr when they're able to get a bite or two, and

<sup>5</sup> [14:7]

here someone takes a bite out of a delicious sandwich and then tosses it in a very disrespectful place. Look at those who walk from trashbin to trashbin seeking food. Preserve the Ni'mah by thanking Allāh سبحانه وتعالى and honoring it. Don't underestimate wasting breadcrumbs or what's less than that. Allāh سبحانه وتعالى revealed

ثُمَّ لَتَسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ

*Then you will surely be asked that Day about pleasure.*<sup>6</sup>

You will be definitely questioned about the delights, the Ni'am, the bounties that you enjoyed. Az-Zubayr رضي الله عنه asked,

وَأَيُّ نَعِيمٍ نُسْأَلُ عَنْهُ وَإِنَّمَا هُوَ الْأَسْوَدَانِ التَّمْرُ وَالْمَاءُ؟

*What delights will we be asked about? All we have is the two black ones — dates and water.*

Az-Zubayr رضي الله عنه said, "What delights are we going to be asked about when all we have is dates and water, the two black ones?" The two black ones means dates and water. What are we going to be asked about when that's all we have? He was surprised. All we have is dates and water and we're going to be asked about that? The Messenger ﷺ said,

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<sup>6</sup> [102:8]

قَالَ: أَمَّا إِنَّ ذَلِكَ سَيَكُونُ

*This will certainly take place.*

You will be questioned about that. You will be questioned about that. If one will be asked about consuming them, imagine wasting them.