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## **ELEMENTS OF EATING MORALITY ACCORDING TO BEDIUZZAMAN SAID NURSI'S VIEWS: A COMPLEMENTARY TO THE BASIC CONCEPT OF FOOD IN ISLAM**

*Elemen Moraliti Pemakanan Mengikut Pandangan Badiuzzaman Said Nursi: Pelengkap konsep Asas Makanan dalam Islam*

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### **Abstract**

The issue of food wastage is considered as a problematic global issue stemmed from lack appreciation of food values gifted to mankind. Learning and taking lessons from historical events are crucial to establish a better future mainly to find solutions in solving arising contemporary issues. The view from *Bediuzzaman Said Nursi* who is one of the prominent Muslim thinkers (1877-1960), is chosen as a role model to understand the elements of eating morality. His work, *Risale-I nur (Flashes of Collection)* will be used as the main source of reference. Meanwhile, other Islamic sources derived from Quranic verses, academic journals, book, and reliable websites are used as supportive references. The result of the discussion signifies *Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's* view on the elements of eating morality are capable to complement the basic concept of food in Islam and it is still relevant to be adopted in facing rapid phases of urbanization process and modernization challenges which lead to morality decline among human beings.

**Keywords:** Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, Eating Morality, Elements, Food.

### Abstrak

Isu pembaziran makanan dianggap sebagai salah satu masalah global yang semakin meruncing yang berpunca daripada kurangnya menghayati nilai makanan yang dianugerahkan kepada manusia. Mempelajari dan mengambil pelajaran daripada peristiwa sejarah sangat penting untuk mewujudkan masa depan yang lebih baik terutamanya dalam mencari jalan penyelesaian terhadap isu-isu kontemporari yang timbul. Pandangan daripada pemikir Muslim terkemuka iaitu Bediuzzaman Said Nursi (1877-1960), dipilih sebagai *‘role model’* untuk memahami unsur-unsur moraliti pemakanan. Hasil karyanya, *Risale-I nur (“Koleksi-Koleksi Kilauan Cahaya”)* akan digunakan sebagai sumber rujukan utama. Manakala, sumber-sumber lain seperti Al-Quran, Hadis Nabi Muhammad, jurnal dan laman web yang boleh dipercayai digunakan sebagai sumber rujukan sokongan. Hasil perbincangan menunjukkan bahawa pandangan Bediuzzaman Said Nursi mengenai elemen-elemen moraliti pemakanan mampu melengkapkan konsep asas makanan dalam Islam disamping ianya masih lagi relevan untuk diguna pakai dalam menghadapi proses urbanisasi dan cabaran modenisasi yang menyebabkan manusia semakin hilang ketinggian moral sebagai seorang insan.

Katakunci: Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, morality pemakanan, elemen, makanan.

### INTRODUCTION

Ibn Khaldun theory rise and fall of civilization signifies human being’s life cycle is dynamic, static and organic in nature as it will continuously undergoing phases of life growth and changes from one phase to another phases. Hence, the emergence of new phase will definitely create new challenges, opportunities, trends, belief, and cultures that shall influencing human’s way of thinking and action on how to react with the new life transformation. In addition, the process of urbanization and modernization experienced in contemporary time is one of the evidence to show the process of civilization is dynamic and keep in moving to shape new socio-economic landscape from old version to more sophisticated version in line with the development of new technology, policy adaptation and human being motivation for renewal the lifestyle (Oniah, 2019).

Revelation of Al- Quran accompanied by Hadith of Prophet Muhammad p.p.u.h as primary sources of (*Shariah*) Islamic law as a guidance for human being to live in accordance of Allah’s command so that the of basic human rights: protection of the right of life; protection of faith, human intellect and reason; and, protection of property are fulfilled in order to restore peace and harmony in nation’s community. Therefore, Muslim nation that should be role –model to other nation since Islamic Law is the only comprehensive law covers all needed aspects required by human being in order

to be successful in this world and hereafter (Kamali, 2015). Recognition of Allah Almighty on Truthfulness of Islam is clearly stated in Al-quran Chapter (Five) verse (thirty);

*“This day I have perfected your religion for you, and completed my favor upon you, and have chosen for you al-Islam as your religion” (5:30)*

In this verse, as explained by Al- Sheha (n. d.) emphasized although Allah has clearly legalized only Islam is the most comprehensive religion with code of beliefs, morals and ethics that shall be adhered by human being, but it does not mean Muslims have the rights to insult and degrade other religious practitioners in the respect of sharing universal principle of humanity which need to be respected each other.

True adherence of Islamic code of *Shariah* will shape a holistic human being under the bound of Islam although thousands of challenges will come and threaten the dignity of Islam particularly among Muslim’s enemies whom are insecure with Islam (Amir, 2003). Unfortunately, living in the contemporary era witnessing some of immorality conducts are dominating in Muslim –majority countries. The issue of food wastage shall be considered as one of the concrete examples among ugly culture trends circulates within majority Muslim countries. It was reported by Zafar (2019) stated Middle East is listed as the top world’s wasters, and this issue is getting worsening during Ramadan such as in Bahrain. There were more than 400 tons per day were thrown away as reported by Rehan Ahmad, Head of Waste Disposal Unit, Bahrain in 2012. The same culture trend was reported by Siti Wahidah (2017) exposed the statistics from Solid Waste Corporation of Malaysia (SW Corp) of food waste in 2015 were approximately reached 15, 000 tones per daily.

Ahmad Kushairi (2018) wrote in a newspaper entitled ‘Food for Thought’ to encourage people rethink due of some irresponsible human’s hands. The researcher claimed that more problems are crashed which has impacted Malaysian health, insufficient of landfills and also leaving a bad impact upon the environment. Additionally, Malaysia is recognized as the third highest in the world after United Kingdom and Germany in terms of wastage rate in overall. Based on different cases of food wastage in Muslim- majority countries signifies although Islamic code of conduct revealed by Allah in perfect revelation for Muslim guidance, but not all are truly following in practical ways although implicitly the commandments are understandable in a convenience ways. There are numerous cases of other unethical trends are currently getting problematic in the contemporary times related to eating lifestyle not only among the Muslim-majority countries but also the non –Muslim which symbolized as the ‘coronary capitalism’ by Kenneth Rogoff, former chief

economist of the International Monetary Fund as a result increasing rates of obesity in different parts of the world in line with the development of food industry in sophisticated advancement. In this case, United States shall be considered as the most severe ‘victim’ for coronary capitalism (Kamali, n.d).

Enhancement on the unethical issues among food practitioners in the contemporary time by researcher had shown the urbanization and modernization process from old version to the new version did not guarantee human being’s maturity to react which are supposedly to react. As emphasized by Dalhat (2015), human being are bestowed with *a’ql*, therefore anyone will be in righteous actions if guided with reasons according to Allah’s commandment as stated in the Quran, Sunnah and the interpretations of early religious Scholars of Islam rather than blindly following the human’s desire. However, it is undeniable that some of different religious practitioners somehow being more ethical compared to Muslim. To be an ethical person is commonly among the main goal of religion, being a religious person could direct human beings to be more disciplined, ethical, moral beings, cultivate a sense of respect towards people and other creatures so that peace and harmony within universe shall be installed (Oniah, 2019). Furthermore, human being is naturally born in *fitrah* (in the state of purity or innocence) who loves goodness, close to Allah and hates any bad deeds. However, human beings tend to fall into immoral acts if not guided through Islamic ways (Syed Hussin, 1996).

To solve up the issues of food wastage and obesity, it must go back to the roots of problems which derived due of excessiveness, indulgence and lavishness towards the material possession. Taking the lessons from historical data will be eternally relevant to establish a better person in the future. According to Berdine (2013), by learning history in different context and figures help to develop some capacity toward asking more questions in mind in order to understand why particular events are happening and how the events and particular perspectives give impacts towards certain society. Optimistically, history provides solution and prepares well-platform to improve human’s wellbeing betterment of future. To complete this writing, Risale I-Nur (The Flashes collection) has been referred as the main source to extract his view on the elements of eating morality. The extracted views from Bediuzzaman Said Nursi shall give a clear picture on how his view is still relevant to complement a basic concept of food in Islam. Yet, the values highlighted by Said Nursi may be implemented by anyone regardless of their religious practitioners whether Muslim or non-Muslim as long as the values are universally suitable for mankind’s practice.

## OVERVIEW ON BEDIUZZAMAN SAID NURSI 'S LIFE AND CHARACTER

The book of *'The Flashes Collection'* translated from *'Lem'alar'* by Şükran Vehide (2009) used by many scholars as a primary source to dig valuable information in different themes neither in education (Said & Umachandran, 2018), spiritual aspects (Keskin, 2015) Islamic economics, (Umar, Ismail & Abdullahi, 2015), humanity and brotherhood (Sofi, 2015). In the context of eating morality, based on researcher's experience in finding the secondary sources from trusted educational websites, journals, it is difficult to find the researchers are truly focusing on morality concept to be linked with food ethics according to Islamic perspectives. *Bediuzzaman Said Nursi* is a great Muslim thinker, leader, devotee and educator who advocates his life to seek Allah's pleasure solely (Vehide, 1992). The life of Said Nursi was recorded in the book of "Bediuzzaman Said Nursi by Sukran Vehide (1992) into three parts which are the period of the old said, the new said and the third said. The period of old saying covered from the period of childhood, teenager, his challenging educational journey in different madrasah with different great *ulema* (Muslim scholars) such as *Molla Fattah Allah of Siirt* till he finally gained the prestige of renowned *ulema* during his migration journey in several places (Sofi, 2017).

The period is also witnessing the life of Said Nursi is getting tougher by facing a lot of obstacles from Turkey secular authorities due of his effort toto defeat secularism. Although he was facing a great obstacle from secular authorities, he will never let anyone broke up his enthusiastic spirit to ensure Islam gains its prestige back in Turkey. He continued his journey to Istanbul for meeting Sultan Abdulhamid II to build up *Medresetü'z-Zehra*, instead of meeting several Istanbul *ulema* and vast up the scope of discussion as too. Although he failed to get immediate result, he gains popularity and attention from Istanbul *Ulama* after he was challenged by Tahir Pasha to have a question- answer among the *Ulema* in order to test his intelligence in various fields of knowledge such as science, philosophy, religion and other fields of knowledge (Yusoff, Yilmaz & Ebrahimi, 2013).

Involvement of Said Nursi in World War 1 to defeat Russia showed his commitment towards Islam is full of sincerity and will do anything for the sake of Islam by forming a group of a Volunteer Regiment to safeguard Caucasian province in eastern Anatolia (Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, 1876-1960, n.d). However Bediuzzaman Said Nursi was captivated by Russian during the battle, but was sent back to Istanbul in order to fulfill a request by Imperial Office as one of the members *Darul Hikmeti- I- Islamiye* (Islamic House of Wisdom) and be honored as rank of Mahrec (Vehide, 1992). Facing numerous obstacles and challenges never put down enthusiastic spirit of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi in completing several important works such as *Ishârat al-I'jâz*, *Lemât*,

Sünûhât and MünâzarâtTülûâ although in this period the secularistic ideas are widely spread through the abolishment of sultanate caliphate which lead to the transition period from Old Said to the New Said (Sofi, 2017).

In the book of “*Bediuzzaman Said Nursi*, Sukran Vehide (1992) gives a clear depiction the life transition of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi from Old Said to the New Said phase. The New Said period has opened up a new dimension by facing more challenges, difficulties, invisible accusation and be tortured mentally. The revolt of Syed Sheikh of Palu from *Naqshabandi tareqat* to defend the demise of sultanate caliphate. He has effected Bediuzzaman Syed Nursi credibility as a ‘*Wise Ulama*’ due he was accused to be responsible for this revolt uprising. The popularity of Syed Nursi in spreading the message of Islam made Turkish authority felt threatened particularly after the rise of Mustapha Kemal as president of Turkish Republic who was too fanatics with the idea of secularism. After he took the ruling, secularism is not a mere ideology, but he was practically diffused secularist practices by introducing secularized acts such as religious dress were banned, using western Gregorian Calendar and demolish Arabic alphabet to be replaced with Latin alphabet. He wanted to excrete the roots of Islamic practices in any possible ways to be flourished among the Turkish. Due of these secularist practices implemented; Bediuzzaman Said Nursi cautioned with the Muslim identity in Turkey since the government put efforts to secularize and modernize the state in line with other western countries. To save the Muslim identity, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi motivated to write more chapters of Risale I Nur as an effort to keep Islam alive in the heart of Turkish. His pure intention, however was misunderstood by the government by accusing the content of Risale I Nur drives the spirit of revolution among the Turkish in order to overthrow the ruling authorities.

Although Turkish authority puts too much tension on Bediuzzaman, he can write more than 130 chapters of Risale-I- Nur ; *Kalimat, al-Maktubat, al-Luma‘at, al-Shu‘a‘at, Isyarat al-I‘jaz fi Mazan al-Ijaz, al-Mathnawi al-‘Arabi al-Nuri, Sayqal al-Islam* and *al-Malahiq* in order to strengthen Turkish’s faith, installing the peace in their heart through his writing (Sairi, 2015). The virtuous characters displayed by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi also attracted people from different parts of Turkey to come and seeking knowledge from him as a result of his creativity in delivering the message of Islam through *bilhikmah* , *mau‘izhatul hasanah wajaadilhum billati hiya ahsan* despite the popularity of Risale I Nur among the Turkish. Da’wah through *bilhikmah* approach is also mentioned together in Al-Quran with the words *mau‘izhatul hasanah* and *wajaadilhum billati hiya ahsan* in Surah Al – Nahl , verse125 as the most important uslub to deliver the message of Islam in a wise manner (Syed Hussin, n.d).

*“(O Prophet), call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and reason with them in the best manner possible. Surely your Lord knows best who has strayed away from His path, and He also knows well those who are guided to the Right Way” (Surah Al-Nahl, 25)*

Abdul Muiz *et al.*, (2018) emphasized this verse is useful to encourage the younger generation to think wisely (*tabayyun*) and act accordingly. Hence, having a true understanding of this verse, can safeguard the Muslim from being radical, blindly gives judgmental decision and blindly following the crowd although there are no enough evidences to confirm the rumors. To summarize, Islam is a peace religion and urges the Muslim to spread the message of Islam in a peaceful manner to avoid misperception about the beauty of Islam as shown through moral character of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi in facing a lot of difficulties, tensions and mentally be tortured, being imprisoned but he still shows mercy and tolerance in any actions and decision will be taking by him as a result of his tawhidic- centric approach as a remedy to handle the life difficulties and challenges (Keskin, 2015).

*“Also, my purpose in showing my worst wound in an extremely grievous and unpleasant way which may upset you unduly and put you off, is to demonstrate what a wondrous remedy and brilliant light is the sacred antidote of the All-Wise Qur’ān”*

## **ELEMENTS OF FOOD MORALITY ACCORDING TO BEDIUZZAMAN SYED NURSI**

The hardship, difficulties and living in tremendous of challenges creates the mind to be more creative to find out the solution in a wise manner. In addition, people whom are living in hardship tend to pose higher common sense and show values appreciation for ‘so –called ‘less important thing from other’s perspectives. This is one of the peculiarity moral characters possessed by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi, although he was tested by Allah s.w.t he is still can act and think wisely in order to avoid any kinds of negativity controlled himself. Nursi explained his personal suffering is extracted from Keskin (2015) cited in the book of Said Nursi *Tarihçe-i Hayati*, Historical Biography (1991):

*“In my 80 or so years of life I have known nothing of worldly pleasure. My entire life has been spent on battlefields, in prison camps, or in the jails and court rooms of my country. There is no suffering or torment to which I have not been subjected. I have been treated like a monster by military courts, and exiled from place to place like a vagabond. I have been condemned to months of solitary confinement in the country’s prisons. I have been poisoned many times, subjected to all forms of insult”*

Throughout the statement wrote by Said Nursi, it is clearly understood that his phases of life is full of suffering which need a resilient spirit to further remaining of life. Optimistically, he is not only facing a lot of obstacles but can complete at the same time he can write his masterpiece work; Risale I Nur which is still relevant till nowadays. The main essence of resiliency of Said Nursi is the way he grasp the difficulties through positive outlook through purification of heart instead of emphasizing material possession to ensure his life is happier (Bakti, Said & Halim, n.d). In addition, he believed Al- Quran is the best solution for any arising problems although the mankind’s lifetime is dynamic from one time to another time. This can be seen through Said Nursi prediction in the future that reason, science and technology will be the most important agent to control the world as noted by (Sheriff, 2016). This can be seen through Said Nursi’s statement:

*“For sure, at the end of time, mankind will pour into science and technology it will obtain all it power from science. Power and dominion will pass to the hands of science”.*

*“Thus, in the future when reason, science, and technology prevail, the Qur’an will surely then rule”*

Based on his statement, although Said Nursi emphasized the role of science and technology will be dominant in line with the global transition, but it is still not capable to replace superiority of Al- Quran as the best solution in whatsoever problems as Allah creates the world in mysterious and full of complexity; hence, it will never sufficient letting science and technology rule the world solely without truly following the ‘pure guidelines’ to limit human action’s in accordance manner. Allah S. W. T is the best planner, creator and know what is the best for human being in line with the human natural inclination (*fitrah*) through the revelation of Islamic Code of Shariah as the main source of Islamic Law which covering different angles of fields such as the social, economic, political, moral, and spiritual aspects of life as a result of the comprehensiveness of Shariah (Ariffin, 2011).

This is in line with Ramdane and Souad, (2017) highlighted that Al- Quran is not a mere holy book as other scriptures in different religion , but it is revealed by Allah s.w.t as a holy guidelines to salvage mankind from corruption and morality degradation as Al-Quran gives a clear guidelines for human being with regards to do’s and don’ts regulation in ensuring the human being behaved in well-manner.

The writing of Risale I- Nur by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi is not merely based on his personal opinion, but his writing based on the Quranic verses as the main source of solution although in Risale I Nur he included his personal experiences too (Eris, 2006



). This is because human being will never be able to manage the worldly affairs that is getting challenging if the divine guidance from Allah s.w.t are ignored. Said Nursi emphasized human being is a weak animal and an impotent creature who is easily drown in manipulation, exploitation, too obsess with material possession and all forms of hedonistic approach leading to degradation of human dignity as God's vicegerent for the whole ummah (Ajmal, 2014). Hence, it is clearly signifies that revelation of Al- Quran as the main source of Islamic law is a sign of Allah's mercy and blessing for those who are truly following the rules and regulation stated in Al-Quran ; Yet, this can be a source of victory for Muslim in the world and hereafter.

The discussion on morality in different angles of perspectives should be highlighted specifically to avoid human's morality degradation in contemporary time. According to Ibrahim (2017) one of the main issues will affect the human community in future are ethical challenges demanding cooperation through creative, active and engagement with various parties to nurture harmonious society applied universal principles of good moral character. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi in his *Risale I Nur* is commonly includes morality aspects at different angles of perspectives. His solution on unethical eating behavior will be a good guideline for consumers to instill sense of valuing the food beyond the common people evaluates. Based on the evaluation of the Flashes Collection, the author points out there are three important elements of food morality according to Bediuzzaman Said Nursi.

The discussion of elements eating morality as follows;

### **Frugality Practice as Gate- Keeping Function**

In the translated *Risale- I Nur* (The Flashes Collection), he has divided into thirty different chapters. Adapted from Nineteenth Flash, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi explained about the importance of frugality to manifest man's gratefulness towards abundance of bounties gifted by Allah S.W.T. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi begins the writing of Nineteenth Flash with *Quranic* verse as follow;

*In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate  
Eat and drink, but waste not by excess (7:31) – The Flashes Collection (1992).*

The purpose of Bediuzzaman quoted this verse to explain the connectivity of practicing frugality that complies with the divine commandment to eat moderately not beyond the capacity needed by the body. The Cambridge Dictionary (n.d) defined frugality as "careful to use only as much money, food, etc. as is necessary". Bediuzzaman Said Nursi highlighted the practicing of frugality is recommended to help human being spending wisely for the sake to fulfill basic necessity of man. For

example, he gives a logic comparison between a person who is choosing to eat more costly food compared to the person who can save up some budget by choosing less cost of food. In this situation, he criticized the person who is willing to spend more budget to pamper the sense of taste although need to pay more money for the sake a few seconds of enjoyable moments. To ensure the readers imagined on this situation; he gives a comparison between two persons in selecting two choices of food which are cheese and egg coated for around forty *paras* and the other one is the pastry coated for around ten *kurush*. He came out with the analogy that both of food choices are able to supply energy for the body although the prices would be different. The statement given by Bediuzzaman shall be referred as below:

*“In consequence of this mystery we shall now imagine two mouthfuls. One consists of nutritious food like cheese and egg and costs forty para, and the other is of the choicest pastries and costs ten kurush. Before entering the mouth, there is no difference in these two mouthfuls with respect to the body, they are equal. And after passing down the throat, they are still equal in nourishing the body. Indeed, forty paras’ worth of cheese is sometimes more nutritious. Only, in regard to pampering the sense of taste in the mouth, there is a half-minute difference. You can see from this what a meaningless and harmful waste it is to increase the cost from forty para to ten kurush for the sake of half a minute”* (The Flashes Collection, 1992).

In addition, he came out with another point that practicing of frugality can avoid the man being a beggar. This is because the frugal will manage the money wisely and never spend beyond the necessity. He also emphasized the practicing of frugality trained him to be self-dependency, not begging to others and not degrading his moral dignity. He mentioned *“I have very little money, but I’am frugal and economical and I am accustomed to being content with little, I am richer than you... The practicing of frugality is interconnected with implementation of wasatiyyah (moderation) that advocates the Muslim community to be in middle path (ummatan wasatan) that adhering the principles of justice and truthfulness in each deeds. Practicing of moderation as a part of human lifestyle will save human being from arrogance, obsessed with the material indulgences, and other spiritual sicknesses that give defects towards purity of heart as emphasized by Prophet Muhammad. (Mohammad Hashim Kamali, 2015). The same opinion highlighted by Imam Al- Ghazali in discussing the basic foundation of Islamic humanism, moderation is included as one of the principles.*

He stressed out something of beautiful may be looked as ugly because of excessiveness such as unethical eating behavior. He gives an example, the bread is originally halal for human being but if it was eaten excessively, it may be unlawful anymore (Johns, n.d.), *Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah* (d. 1350 CE) also observed that being excessive in consuming the food leads to major causes of diseases as a result

the digestive system is in problematic condition while limiting the body movements. Due of the problems, it naturally creates temptation to eat more and difficult to satisfy the temptation because the stomach need a larger portion of food to satisfy the temptation. In addition, he emphasized that the main function of food to satisfy the need (*al-hajah*), then to the extent of sufficiency (*al-Kifayah*). But, if it is beyond both levels, the man has tendency eating the food in order to satisfy the level of indulgence and excessiveness (*al-fallah*). *Ibn Al-Qayyim* stressed out further Prophet Muhammad is eating a few mouths to satisfy his hunger and gives energy for him solely. (Kamali, n.d.) . Implementing moderation is an important values to ensure the human being keep in balance and to show sense of responsibility towards Allah S.W.T. As a vicegerent of Allah S.W.T, the mankind should cultivate the natural resources bounded from Him in a wise way and avoiding excessiveness beyond the necessity of human being as a sign of respect towards ecosystem which are dependable each other. Therefore, limiting on utilization of natural resources for many purposes are crucial to preserve the sustainability of natural resources will be enjoyable by upcoming generation in future (Manoiu & Azzeddine, 2016).

To summarize, the ideas of Said Nursi to practice frugality is in line with the encouragement of Islamic ethical to be moderate in any good deeds. This universal practice will be an important solution to safeguard man drowns in the material possession beyond the necessity of human being and to ensure the human being appreciate the values of bounties granted from Allah S. W.T through wise utilization.

### **Appreciate the Food as a Valuable Gift from Allah S.W.T.**

The food gifted by Allah S. W.T is a sign of His Blessing and Merciful as the Greatest Sustainer (Vehide, 2009). The grateful of man will recognize and accounting the varieties of divine bounties even on the tiny scales presenting in the food to nourish human body. Then after satisfying the hunger, the mind and heart signifies sense of gratefulness towards the *rizq* bestowed from Allah S. W.T. In this respect, the sense of appreciation produces peaceful state towards mind, heart and spiritual aspects. Likewise, the eaten food is actually not only satisfying the taste temptation, but the tongue ‘read’ the taste as a sign of gratefulness towards Allah S.W.T. This can be seen through a statement noted by Bediuzzaman as follows:

*“However, the sense of taste of those truly on the way of thanks, those seeking reality, and those who approach reality with their hearts is like a supervisor and inspector in the kitchens of divine mercy”* (The Flashes Collection, 1992).

Those who keep signifying the gratefulness towards Allah S.W.T is willing to share the food with others although it is in the small amount. This is because the food is

valued beyond its main purpose not only to satisfy an individual hunger, but to satisfy the hunger ‘collectively’. This is in line with the commandment of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) to eat the food in the congregation (*jama'ah*) (Hammed, 2017) manner Although Said Nursi is a frugal practitioner, he is always sharing the food with his students (Umar, Ismail, & Abdullahi, 2015). In addition, to signify his gratefulness, there was an incident whereby he was sharing the breadcrumbs with the ants once his younger brother Mehmed brought him some food (Yucel, 2018). His good deed was questioned by his brother why he did such deed, he replied, “*I have observed that they have a social life and work together diligently and conscientiously, so I want to help them as a reward for their republicanism*” (Vehide, 1992) . There was another incident, he shared, makes a hole and put a piece of food in the hole to help the mouse easier to eat the food. His action was questioned by his student known as *Tahsin Aydin*. Nursi replied to him by emphasizing that “*This mouse is teaching me some lessons*”.

On the other hand, the Prophet Muhammad P. B.U.H highlighted the primary goal of eating in Islam to obtain the blessing from Allah s.w.t .Therefore, sharing the food is regarded as an act of *Ibadah* towards Allah S. W.T as the prophet said ;

*“O’ God, grant us abundance (barakah) of bread and do not let us be separated from it, for without it we will not be able to perform ritual prayer, fast, and perform our divine obligations.”*

Among the common practice of prophet Muhammad is inviting his companions and guests to enjoy the food together. He emphasized that more hands will be perfect than a pair of hands. Practicing of eating in congregation is normally sufficient for the involved members as a result of the people’s willingness to share each portion with one another (Mohammad Reza Jabbari, n.d.) The prophet Muhammad has mentioned in one hadith;

*“Eating food with people brings about abundance. One person’s food portion is enough for two people, and two people’s food portion is enough for four”* (This hadith is narrated from Imam Sadiq taking the authority from Imam Ali).

The philosophical view of Bediuzzaman Said Nursi in valuing the food is manifested on bread making processes. He depicted the process of making bread is having connection with human’s hard work who need to cultivate, harvest, mill and baking process. In the process making, the producer cannot omit one step to ensure the production process is successful (Ali, n.d.) . Likewise, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi also noted in the Thirtieth Flash, Risale I Nur Allah S. W.T sustained and designing the world with plant and animals with different species in the most perfect form as he

exegete the Quranic verse ; *“Invite [all] to the way of your Sustainer with wisdom”*(16:125) . Therefore, it was the task of human being to cultivate all the natural resources bestowed upon human being in a good manner as Allah has exclusively created animals and plants to be benefitted by human being as the most important source of food. The abundance of bounties revealed from Allah S. W.T does not mean the human being is free from Allah’s accountability for every single deeds cultivated in their daily life (Rochania & Norakma 2011).

### **Eat When is Necessary**

Islam is a comprehensive religion and its Islamic code of conduct is covering the whole aspects of human life ( Ahmad Kamal Ariffin, 2011). The nutrition consisted in the food is a benchmark to identify the goodness of food for human health.(Marzband, Moallemi, & Darabinia, 2017). The wise consumer will select the food can provide the good nutrients for human growth and preserve the good spirituality dimension upon the consumer. In the context of Islamic dietary guidelines, the Muslim need to follow the specific guidelines the food categories which are lawful non-lawful, recommended and not recommended for Muslim consumption (Imam Mufti, 2019).The main purpose of having specific guidelines in food dietary to preserve the Muslim morality and to obtain *barakah* from Allah S. W.T. Moreover, Allah will not accept any practice of ibadah if the sources of food derived from haram sources (*“Halal dan Haram dalam Islam Mengikuti Pandangan Imam Al-Ghazali, translated from Kitab Al- Halal wal Haram, 2000*).

*Miqdam ibn Ma’d* as recorded in Sunan Tirmidhi (2380) reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings upon him, said, *“The son of Adam cannot fill a vessel worse than his stomach, as it is enough for him to take a few bites to straighten his back. If he cannot do it, then he may fill it with a third of his food, a third of his drink, and a third of his breath.”*

This hadith is confirmed sahih by Ibn Muflih (Elias, n,d).

Based on this hadith, it shall be understood to have a balanced diet is very important to train the self- control from being too excessive in dietary habit. Moreover, the prophet Muhammad also encourages to take the food once feel hungry only (Zahid, n,d).

In addition, there was a historical event when a generous King of Persia sent to Prophet Muhammad, a great physician in Arabia for one or two years. He felt so weird because no one is approaching him to get the treatment. Then he came to the Prophet to find the answer for his curiosity. The Prophet Muhammad P. B.U.H explained the

companions will fill the stomach once in hunger, and will stop eating while the desire still remains there (Rahman, 2011). In the context of Islamic dietary law, instead of focusing on Halal and haram, Allah S.W.T encourages the man to be moderate in dietary habit to show man's gratefulness towards Allah's bounties. Bediuzzaman Said Nursi on the other hand emphasized that is moderate in expenditure opens the door of thankfulness towards Allah s.w.t and close up the door of complaining if some dissatisfaction appears. In addition, he noted in his writing of *Risale I-Nur*, one of the Mufti keeps complaining to him the citizen are poor, although the city is bounded with a plenty sources of wealth due the immoderation practices among the citizen. The satisfaction of Bediuzzaman in practicing moderation in his dietary habit is noted in the Flashes Collection (1992) he claimed that he can finish an okka of honey within two month during Ramadhan and Sha'aban.

*"I consumed my one okka of honey frugally. For the whole of Sha'ban and Ramadan both I ate it, and, Praise is to God,"*

The moderate eating behavior in enjoying the honey was depicted by Bediuzzaman Said Nursi in his conversation with his three students. He was reluctant to accept the honey given by one his students for around two and half of okka. All of the brothers are actually frugal practitioners, but because they forget to be moderate and be economical in eating the honey, the brothers ate the honey half of it within the three nights only. He also noted that some of the people accused he was stingy. But, he believed that his decision is able to save up his life from greediness, tends to complaint instead of be grateful with Allah's endless bounties.

## CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, the element of food morality adapted from the Flashes Collection is significantly relevant to evaluate the values of food in Islam. The Muslim is commonly understand and being exposed with the basic concept of food in Islam but in terms of appreciation of food values are still lacking as the issues of food wastage and unhealthy eating behavior are still in severe. The increasing amount of food wastage particularly in the most holy month, Ramadhan is sufficient to understand the level of appreciation the food values. Be moderate in all aspects shall be considered as the most important key value to safeguard human being from excessiveness. Based on the elements of eating morality extracted from Bediuzzaman Said Nursi experiences and views signifies the main purpose of Allah S.W.T creates tremendous of food sources to test the man neither be a food slave or eating the food for the sake of ibadah.

Most of the Muslim understand the basic concept of food in Islam in terms of differentiate between halal and haram , but it is rarely to understand the wisdom

behind the tremendous bounties of natural resources bestowed from Allah S.W.T Practicing of frugality is one the best solutions to safeguard the man indulges in spending for unnecessary things. Indirectly, this practice can train the man to be resilient particularly during the hard times such as in the war time and calamities phases as the food sources are scarce. The main encouragement to practice frugality is to enhance the sense of gratefulness towards Allah S.W.T in any situations mainly during the difficult time. Last but not least, be a frugal practitioner can save up human being falls down into greediness and selfishness as a result realizing the rizq bestowed by Allah s.w.t is not exclusively for an individual solely, but it belongs to other creatures as well; Therefore, by understanding the values of food as recommended by Islam will be a strong fortress for mankind from any kind of morality degradation which can affecting peace and harmony in society.

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