

Interpretation of QS. al-Wāqi’ah [56]: 20-21 as a Solution-Oriented Diet for Nutritional Health: Analysis of Tafsir and Nutritional Science Approaches

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Abstract:

This article aims to analyze the concept of a health-promoting dietary pattern based on the interpretation of QS. Al-Wāqi’ah [56]: 20–21 by classical and modern Qur’anic exeges, alongside perspectives from nutritional health sciences that affirm these interpretations through empirical research. The study employs a thematic approach combined with nutritional science and uses a library research method. The analysis focuses on QS. Al-Wāqi’ah [56]: 20–21 by examining tafsir sources that offer linguistic explanations of the verses and their relevance to contemporary nutritional discourse, including *Tafsir Mafatih al-Ghayb*, *Tafsir al-Munir*, *Tafsir Ma’alim al-Tanzil*, and *Tafsir al-Misbah*. The findings indicate that the interpretations of these verses show meaningful relevance to nutritional health, supported by current scientific studies. In the field of Qur’anic exegesis, the precedence of “fruit” before “meat” in the verse is understood as an indication that fruit is lighter, digests faster, is more easily processed by the body, and can stimulate appetite before the main meal. This interpretation aligns with nutritional science, particularly research from Japan demonstrating that structuring meal order—beginning with vegetables and proteins before carbohydrates—can slow the post-meal rise in blood glucose levels. Thus, the interpretation of this verse can be viewed as offering a practical and beneficial dietary model for maintaining nutritional health.

Keywords: Nutrition, Health, Dietary Pattern, QS. Al-Wāqi’ah [56]: 20–21, Science

Abstrak:

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis konsep pola makan yang solutif bagi kesehatan gizi berdasarkan penafsiran para mufassir terhadap QS. Al-Wāqi’ah [56]: 20-21 dan juga pandangan dari ilmu kesehatan gizi berupa penelitian-penelitian yang memberikan afirmasi terhadap penafsiran ini. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pendekatan tematik dan sains gizi dengan jenis penelitian *library research* (penelitian kepustakaan). Analisa pada penelitian ini berfokus pada QS. Al-Wāqi’ah [56]: 20-21 dengan mengkaji sumber data pada kitab tafsir yang mengungkap adanya penjelasan dari aspek kebahasaan pada ayat tersebut dan relevansinya dengan diskursus kesehatan gizi seperti *Tafsir Mafatih al-Ghaib*, *Tafsir al-Munir*, *Tafsir Ma’alim at-Tanzil* dan *Tafsir al-Misbah*. Penelitian ini menghasilkan kesimpulan bahwa pemaknaan oleh para mufassir pada ayat ini rupanya memiliki relevansi dengan kesehatan gizi yang terbuktikan oleh hasil riset dan penelitian di bidang kesehatan. Dalam ilmu tafsir dinyatakan bahwa menyebutkan buah didahulukan daripada daging karena buah memiliki sifat yang lebih ringan, cepat turun dari perut, lebih mudah dicerna, lebih sehat, daripada daging serta dapat membangkitkan selera makan sebelum makanan utama. Hal ini mendapat pembuktian dari ilmu kesehatan gizi dengan adanya riset dari Jepang mengenai megatur urutan pola

makan dengan mendahulukan sayuran dan daging (protein) terlebih dahulu sebelum karbohidrat membuktikan terjadinya perlambatan pada lonjakan kadar gula darah setelah makan. Sehingga dapat dikatakan bahwa pemaknaan terhadap ayat ini dapat dijadikan sebagai praktik dari pola makan yang solutif bagi kesehatan gizi.

Kata Kunci: Gizi, Kesehatan, Pola Makan, QS. Al-Wāqi'ah [56]: 20-21, Sains

Introduction

Islam has, since its earliest period, provided comprehensive and complete guidance for the course of human life expressed in the form of commands, prohibitions, and subtle indications that invite reflection. Unhealthy eating patterns can lead to various forms of bodily harm and disease, even though the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) emphasized that God loves the strong believer more than the weak one. God commands the believers to consume food that is not only halal (*lawful*) but also *tayyib* (*pure, wholesome, and nutritionally good*), as stated in Surah al-Baqarah [2]: 168:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مَمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُولَتَ السَّيِّطِينِ إِنَّهُمْ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ

“O mankind! Eat of what is lawful and good from what is on the earth, and do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Truly, he is an open enemy to you.”

In this verse, several exegetical interpretations indicate that it serves as a recommendation or guideline for consuming food that is nutritious and health-promoting. Ibn Kathīr explains in his *Tafsīr* that the term *tayyib* refers to food that is lawful and wholesome—food that, when consumed, produces good effects and does not harm either the body (physically) or the mind (psychologically).¹ A similar interpretation appears in *Tafsīr al-Munīr*, which states that *tayyib* food is lawful food that benefits the body and does not cause physical or mental harm; therefore, it is impermissible to consume impure or filthy food or animals.² Ibn al-Qayyim further categorizes human eating behavior into three levels: eating to fulfill basic needs, eating in moderation, and eating excessively.³ This categorization is also echoed in a saying of the Prophet:

حَدَّثَنَا هِشَامُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْمَلِكِ الْحِمْصِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، حَدَّثَنِي أُمِّي، عَنْ أُمِّهَا، أَكَّاهَا سَعِّدَتِ الْمِقْدَامَ بْنَ مَعْدِي گَرِّبِ يَقُولُ: سَعِّدَتْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ يَقُولُ: «مَا مَلَأَ آدَمِيٌّ وِعَاءً شَرَّا مِنْ بَطْنٍ، حَسْبُ الْأَدَمِيِّ لِقَيْمَاتُ يُقْمِنُ صُلْبَهُ، فَإِنْ عَلِبَتِ الْأَدَمِيَّ نَفْسُهُ، فَثُلِثَ لِلطَّعَامِ، وَثُلِثَ لِلشَّرَابِ، وَثُلِثَ لِلنَّفْسِ».⁴

“Hishām ibn al-Malik al-Himṣi narrated to us, Muhammad ibn Ḥarb narrated to us, and my mother narrated to me from her mother (my grandmother), who reported that she heard from al-Miqdām ibn Ma‘dī Karib, who said: ‘I heard the Messenger of God (peace be upon him) say: No

¹ Ibnu Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-'Alim*, (Dār Tayyibah li al-Nasyr wa at-Tauzī', 1999), Cet. 1, Jilid 1, 478

² Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Tafsīr al-Munīr*, (Dār al-Fikr, Damaskus, 1991), Cet.1, Jilid 2, 74.

³ Ibnu Qayyim Al-Jauziyah, *Buku Pintar Kedokteran Nabi Muhammad*, Terj. Abu Firly (Depok: PT. Fathan Prima Media, 2013), 42.

⁴ Ibnu Mājah, *Sunan Ibnu Majah*, (Dār al-Ṣadīq li Al-Nasyr, Saudi, 2014), 3349, 715.

human ever fills a vessel worse than his stomach. It is sufficient for the son of Adam to eat a few mouthfuls to keep his back straight. But if he must (eat more), then one third is for his food, one third for his drink, and one third for his breath.”

Regarding this hadith, a physician of the past named Ibn Masawaih once read it and remarked: “If Muslims were to practice the teachings of this hadith, they would be protected from many illnesses; hospitals and pharmacies would become empty.” He said this because many diseases arise from the habit of filling the stomach excessively. Supporting this view, Ibn Rajab also stated that eating little is better than eating much, as it brings greater benefit to physical health. Among the benefits of eating lightly for the heart are increased softness of the heart, sharper understanding, a calmer soul, restrained base desires, and greater control over anger, conditions that differ markedly from those who habitually overeat.⁵

From this hadith, it is understood that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) offered a practical guideline for filling the stomach: dividing it into one third for food, one third for drink, and one third left empty so as not to hinder breathing. The purpose of eating is none other than to meet the body’s needs for sustaining life—replacing depleted substances, regulating body temperature, and supporting bodily growth and development.

From the explanations above, it can be simplified that nutritious food refers to food that is ideal in both quality and quantity for all humans.⁶ A balanced diet is necessary as nutritional intake to replenish the body’s lost substances after activities, to relieve hunger, to support optimal bodily function, and to strengthen the immune system. Nutritional balance is achieved by consuming a variety of food components, which also serves as an effort to maintain harmony and well-being between the body, mind, and soul.

The facts presented above, if not taken seriously, may negatively affect human well-being, particularly the health of Muslim communities. In Indonesia, for example, the majority of people consume high amounts of carbohydrates daily while engaging in relatively low levels of physical activity. This imbalance contributes to the rising potential for diabetes mellitus.⁷ Disorders in carbohydrate metabolism among individuals with diabetes mellitus can lead to more serious complications, such as uncontrolled hyperglycemia, which may cause damage to other organs including the eyes, kidneys, nerves, heart, and peripheral blood vessels.⁸

In this study, the author provides a brief review of previous research with a similar scope, namely dietary patterns and health in the Qur'an. The first is a study conducted by M. Arif Fajar Satrio entitled *Healthy Food in the Qur'an: A Perspective from Tafsir al-Azbar*. This

⁵ Ibnu Rajab, *Jāmi' Al-'Ulūm wa Al-Hikam*, (Penerbit Muassasah Ar-Risalah, 2011), Cet. 10, Jilid, 468-469.

⁶ Abdul Basith Muhammad Al-Sayyid, *Rahasia Pola Makan Nabi*, Terj. Umar Mujtahid (Solo: Kiswah Media, 2019), Cet. 2, 38-39.

⁷ Dwipajati, Sutomo Rum, *Pembatasan Porsi Nasi dan Konsumsi Buah Sebelum Makan dengan Kadar HbA1c dan Lemak Perut Penderita Diabetes Mellitus Tipe-2 di Kota Malang*, Amerta Nutrition Vol. 8, Issue 1, Maret 2024, 58.

⁸ Ibid.

research is categorized as library research, using both classical and contemporary exegetical works as its primary sources. The study compares various Qur'anic verses related to food. It concludes that, according to *Tafsir al-Azbar*, the concept of food can be classified into several categories: healthy food, proportional eating, food as a call or invitation, food as a warning, and food as a divine blessing.⁹ The second related study is by Ina Wati, entitled *Health in the Perspective of the Qur'an*. This research is also a library study utilizing classical and modern tafsir, particularly *Tafsir al-Misbāh*, *Tafsir Ibn Kathir*, and *Tafsir al-Marāghī*. Her findings indicate that the Qur'an provides comprehensive guidance on health, covering personal hygiene, environmental health, nutritional well-being, maternal and child health, and mental health.¹⁰

From these previous studies as well as the author's own literature search, no research has been found that specifically analyzes QS. Al-Wāqi'ah [56]: 20–21 in relation to nutritional health discourse. In light of this gap, the present article aims to investigate how the interpretation of QS. Al-Wāqi'ah [56]: 20–21 can offer a constructive dietary pattern beneficial for nutritional health. This article examines QS. Al-Wāqi'ah [56]: 20–21 by consulting major tafsir works that explore linguistic and thematic dimensions relevant to nutritional science, including *Tafsir Mafatīh al-Ghayb*, *Tafsir al-Munir*, *Tafsir Ma'ālim al-Tanzil*, and *Tafsir al-Misbāh*.

Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the literature and deepen scholarly understanding within the field of Qur'anic exegesis, particularly thematic interpretation and its integration with other scientific disciplines, in this case nutritional health. Practically, the author hopes that this research will raise public awareness about the importance of maintaining health through proper dietary habits.

A research study must be conducted systematically using an appropriate methodological framework in order to achieve its intended objectives. The same applies to Qur'anic exegesis: a sound research method is required so that the study proceeds systematically and yields an accurate understanding of the meanings contained in the Qur'anic verses. According to 'Abd al-Hayy al-Farmawī, there are four principal methods of Qur'anic interpretation: the *tablīḥ* (analytical) method, the *ijmāḥ* (global) method, the *muqāraṇ* (comparative) method, and the *mawdū'i* (thematic) method.¹¹

In this research, the author employs the thematic method due to its compatibility with the selected topic. Among the subdivisions of the thematic method, the most relevant to this study is the conceptual thematic method, since the theme examined here is not mentioned explicitly in the Qur'an but is instead derived from its underlying ideas and concepts. The analytical approach used in this research is qualitative, with the type of study being library research.¹²

⁹ M. Arif Fajar Satrio, *Makanan Sehat Dalam Al-Qur'an Perspektif Tafsir Al-Azbar*, Skripsi, UIN Raden Intan Lampung, 2021.

¹⁰ Ina Wati, *Kesehatan Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an*, Skripsi, UIN Ar-Rainry Banda Aceh, 2019.

¹¹ Nina Aminah, *Pendidikan Kesehatan Dalam Al-Qur'an*, (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2013), 37.

¹² Abdul Mustaqim, *Metode Penelitian Al-Qur'an Dan Tafsir*, (Yogyakarta: Idea Press, 2014), Cet 1, 61–62.

The data sources consist of primary and secondary references. The primary sources are drawn from Qur'anic exegetical works that provide linguistic explanations of the relevant verses and discuss their relation to nutritional health discourse, such as *Tafsir Mafatih al-Ghayb*, *Tafsir al-Munir*, *Tafsir Ma'ālim al-Tanzil*, and *Tafsir al-Miṣbāḥ*, all of which elaborate on the interpretation of QS. Al-Wāqi'ah [56]: 20–21. The secondary sources include books, articles, and other scholarly writings related to the study of the Qur'an, Prophetic traditions, and academic journals discussing dietary patterns and nutritional health.

Results and Discussion

General Overview of *Tayyib* Food

The integration of tafsir and scientific knowledge in this study is carried out through a thematic–conceptual exegetical approach to Qur'anic verses related to healthy dietary patterns. This approach seeks to connect exegetical understandings of Qur'anic texts with findings from modern nutritional science. In this context, the concept of healthy eating is explored through verses that mention fruits and meat as recommended sources of food. This can be observed in QS. Al-Wāqi'ah [56]: 20–21, in which the linguistic structure of the Qur'an subtly indicates a sequence that, according to classical and contemporary exegetes, contains meanings relevant to nutritional health.

In *Lisān al-'Arab*, the term “nutrition” (*ghidhā*) is defined as something that serves as a source of nourishment for the body. It is described as any substance—whether food or drink—whose components support physical growth and strengthen bodily functions.¹³ In other words, nutrition refers to the essential substances required by the human body to carry out its functions optimally. From the perspective of nutritional science, nutrition is defined as a collection of substances needed by the body to perform essential functions such as growth, development, tissue repair, and energy production.¹⁴

On QS. Al-Wāqi'ah

Surah Al-Wāqi'ah is one of the chapters of the Qur'an that provides a vivid description of the events of the Day of Judgment and the rewards prepared for the righteous. In a spiritual–economic context, this surah is believed to carry blessings associated with the expansion of sustenance and protection from economic hardship. As stated in a hadith narrated by Imam al-Bayhaqī, the Prophet declared that whoever recites this surah every night will be safeguarded from poverty.

عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ يَقُولُ : مَنْ قَرَأَ سُورَةَ الْوَاقِعَةِ فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ مُّمْكِنٍ فَأَفَتُحُ لَهُ الْبَابَ أَبَدًا. رواه البيهقي، وإسناده ضعيف، لكن يُعملُ بِهِ فِي الْفَضَائِلِ.¹⁵

¹³ Ibnu Mandzhur, *Lisān al-'Arab*, (Dār Shadir, Beirut, 1994), Cet. 3, Jilid 15, 119.

¹⁴ Sockirman, *Ilmu Gizi Dasar*, (Jakarta, EGC, 2021), 71.

¹⁵ Al-Baihaqī, *Sy'ab al-Imān*, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 1989), juz 2 , 491, no. 2499.

“Abdullah Ibn Mas‘ud (may Allah be pleased with him) narrated: ‘I heard the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) say, ‘Whoever recites Surah Al-Wāqi‘ah every night will never be afflicted by poverty.’”

It is important to note that this hadith is considered weak (*da‘if*) in terms of its chain of transmission, and therefore it cannot serve as a strong legal foundation in matters of jurisprudence. However, its practice remains permissible within the category of *fadā'il al-a‘mal* (virtuous deeds), because the weakness of a narration does not automatically render it fabricated (*mawdū‘*). The narration from Ibn Mas‘ud reinforces the idea that anyone who recites Surah Al-Wāqi‘ah every night will not experience poverty. This narrative highlights the importance of spiritual interaction with the Qur‘an, where the recitation of this surah is not only an act of worship but is also believed to bring blessings and tranquility in facing economic challenges. Symbolically, it illustrates the Qur‘an’s role as a source of inner peace as well as guidance for confronting material hardship.

Furthermore, classical works on *Fadā'il al-Qur‘ān* mention that reciting Surah Al-Wāqi‘ah is highly recommended due to its numerous spiritual merits. Among these virtues is attaining the love of Allah and the affection of people. The Prophet also stated that whoever recites this surah every night will not experience constriction in sustenance. In addition, this surah is believed to bring blessings in worldly life and provide deeper understanding of the realities of Paradise and Hell, thereby encouraging individuals to increase righteous deeds and avoid immoral acts.

أَنَّ عُثْمَانَ بْنَ عَفَّانَ، رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ دَخَلَ عَلَى عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ وَهُوَ وَجْعٌ، فَقَالَ: لَوْ أُوصِيَتِ إِلَيْنَا فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ تُخْلِفُ أَوْ تَدْعُ بَنَاتِ حَفِظَنَاهُنَّ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ، فَقَالَ: إِنِّي قَدْ عَلِمْتُهُنَّ سُورَةَ الْوَاقِعَةِ، وَسَعَيْتُ لِيَتِي صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقُولُ: مَنْ قَرَأَهَا أَحْسَبَهُ فَالَّذِي فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ عُوفٌ مِنَ الْفَعْرِ.¹⁶

“It is narrated that ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān (may Allah be pleased with him) visited ‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘ud when he was ill. ‘Uthmān said, ‘O ‘Abdullah, if only you would leave a will for us, for if you pass away and leave behind daughters, we will take care of them after your departure.’ ‘Abdullah ibn Mas‘ud replied, ‘I have already taught them Surah Al-Wāqi‘ah, and I heard the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) say, ‘Whoever recites it every night’ I think he said, ‘will be protected from poverty.’”

Chronologically, Surah Al-Wāqi‘ah is classified as a *Makkan* surah revealed before the Prophet’s migration to Madinah, as agreed upon by the majority of scholars of Qur‘anic studies, though some hold that a few of its verses were revealed after the migration. Quraish Shihab explains that the central theme of Surah Al-Wāqi‘ah is the depiction of the Day of Judgment, the process of the earth’s destruction, and descriptions of the delights that await

¹⁶ Muhammad Ayyub Al-Bajili, *Fadail Al-Qur‘ān li Ibni ad-Dhāris*, (Damaskus: Darul Fikr, 1987), 103.

the righteous and the punishment destined for the disobedient.¹⁷ Citing the view of al-Biqā'i, Quraish Shihab adds that the surah outlines three categories of people: (1) those who are closest to Allah (*al-sābiqūn al-muqarrabūn*), who excel in obedience; (2) the righteous who remain obedient though not belonging to the first group; and (3) those who commit wrongdoing and hypocrisy, from among both humans and jinn. Additionally, Nawawi al-Bantani states that this surah is *Makkan*, consisting of 97 verses, 398 words, and 1,703 letters.¹⁸

The Exegesis of Classical and Contemporary *Mufassirūn* on QS. Al-Wāqi‘ah [56]: 20-21

Allah, exalted is He, implicitly indicates the potential nutritional benefits found in fruits and meat in the verses describing the food enjoyed by the inhabitants of Paradise in QS. Al-Wāqi‘ah [56]: 20-21:

وَفَاكِهَةٌ مِّمَّا يَتَحِيزُونَ وَلَحْمٌ طَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ

“And fruit of whatever they choose, and the meat of birds of whatever they desire.”

The context of this series of verses (from verse 13 to 26) describes the delights that will be granted to *al-sābiqūn*, namely that they will recline on luxurious couches, served by attendants ready to fulfill their needs, and provided with delicious food and drink. In addition, they will be accompanied by pure spouses and will enjoy conversations free from frivolous, impure, or sinful speech. In such an atmosphere, they will greet one another with words of peace, indicating a perfect afterlife, free from all worldly disturbances and imperfections. Thus, the portrait of these delights emphasizes not only material pleasures but also spiritual bliss, encompassing purity of the soul, clarity of communication, and tranquillity of heart under the shade of Allah’s pleasure.¹⁹

As for the verse, وَفَاكِهَةٌ مِّمَّا يَتَحِيزُونَ وَلَحْمٌ طَيْرٌ مِّمَّا يَشْتَهُونَ, it depicts the pleasures of Paradise in the form of fruits that the inhabitants can choose freely and the meat of birds that they desire according to their tastes. Al-Zuhaylī highlights a particular wisdom behind the mention of fruit before meat (as reflected in the order of the verse). He explains that fruits are lighter, descend more quickly from the stomach, are easier to digest, healthier, and stimulate appetite before the main course.²⁰

Imam al-Rāzī, in his *tafsīr*, provides additional linguistic insight into this verse. He emphasizes the distinction between the word “التحيز” (choice/option), associated with fruits, and “الاشتهاء” (desire/appetite), associated with meat. Al-Rāzī explains that if both a hungry person and a full person are presented with meat and fruit, the hungry person will naturally incline toward meat, whereas the full person will choose fruit. Thus, when a person has no urgent need for food, he may choose (*takhayyur*) fruit according to preference. Fruit, therefore,

¹⁷ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, (Ciputat, Lentera Hati: 2002), Jilid XIV, 541.

¹⁸ Nawawi Al-Bantani, *Tafsir Marah Labib*, (Beirut, Dar Kutub Ilmiyah: 1996), jilid II, 511.

¹⁹ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Tafsir al-Munir*, (Dār al-Fikr, Damaskus, 1991), Cet.1, Jilid 27, 247.

²⁰ Wahbah al-Zuhayli, *Tafsir al-Munir*, (Dār al-Fikr, Damaskus, 1991), Cet.1, Jilid 27, 249.

aligns more closely with the notion of *tafakkub* (enjoyment without necessity), whereas meat is the opposite. Meat appeals more strongly to someone who is hungry because it is heavier, more filling, and central to one's appetite for food; hence, it is associated with *isytibā'* (desire). Accordingly, the depiction of Paradise is conveyed in terms comprehensible to humans: for the hungry, meat is the desired (*musytibā*) food; for those not in need of food, fruit becomes the optional (*mukhtār*) preference. Thus, meat is linked to desire, while fruit is linked to choice.²¹

Referring to al-Baghawī's *tafsīr* on this verse, his interpretation can be summarized into two main points. First, the word فاكهة (fruits), which is linked with the term تَحْيَي (choosing), is analogized with the expression *takhayyartu asy-ya'*, meaning that when someone chooses something, they will naturally select what is best from it. This indicates that the fruits mentioned in the verse represent an option chosen selectively, reflecting the finest quality. Second, the word لحم (meat), which is paired with the term اشتهي (desiring), refers to Ibn 'Abbās's explanation that when a person in Paradise desires the meat of a bird, that meat will immediately appear before them exactly according to their wish.²²

Meanwhile, Quraish Shihab in *Tafsīr al-Miṣbāḥ* presents an interpretation similar to that of Imam al-Rāzī. He explains that, in addition to the drinks and youthful servants circulating around them, the inhabitants of Paradise are also offered a variety of delicious fruits that they may choose, as well as the meat of birds that is served according to what they desire in terms of type and preparation. He notes that the use of the word تَحْيَيون (they choose) for fruits and يَشْتَهِون (they desire) for bird meat reflects common human experience, where strong cravings are usually associated with main dishes such as meat.²³ From these interpretations, we may formulate the following three conclusions:

1. The mention of fruits before meat indicates that fruits are lighter, easier to digest, healthier, and serve to stimulate appetite before the main meal.
2. Fruits are the preferred choice for someone who is already full, whereas meat is the preferred choice for someone who is hungry, due to its heavier and more filling nature.
3. Fruits signify the finest choice, as implied in the term *takhayyur*—analogous to the expression *takhayyartu asy-ya'* (choosing the best part of something)—while meat corresponds to need and desire, aligning with the meaning of *isytibā'* (longing or craving).

The Relevance of the Interpretation of QS. Al-Wāqi'ah [56]: 20–21 as a Dietary Pattern that Offers a Solution for Nutritional Health

Nutritional health is a branch of health science that studies the relationship between food, nutrients, and the human body, with the goal of maintaining growth, development, and preventing disease.²⁴ Practically, this field emphasizes the balance of energy intake,

²¹ Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Mafātih al-Ghaib*, (Dār Ihyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabiyy, Beirut, 1998), Cet. 3, Jilid 29, 396.

²² Al-Baghawī, *Ma'ālim al-Tanzīl*, (Riyadh: Dār Ṭayyibah, 1997), Cet. 4, Jilid 8, 10.

²³ Quraish Shihab, *Tafsīr Al-Miṣbāḥ*, (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002), Vol. 13, 550-551.

²⁴ Gibney, Michael J. et al., *Introduction to Human Nutrition*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 4.

macronutrients (carbohydrates, proteins, fats), and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) according to the needs of both individuals and communities.²⁵

The majority of the Indonesian population has a high daily intake of carbohydrates—primarily white rice—which creates a potential risk for diabetes mellitus.²⁶ This occurs because Indonesia, as part of Asia, depends on white rice as a staple food. However, it is important to note that white rice is a staple with a high glycemic index.²⁷ Daily consumption of high-glycemic index foods like white rice can cause significant fluctuations in postprandial blood glucose levels,²⁸ even in healthy individuals.²⁹ Findings from several meta-analyses show a positive correlation between high white-rice consumption and the prevalence of type 2 diabetes mellitus.³⁰ Carbohydrate metabolism disorders in diabetic patients lead to uncontrolled hyperglycemia, which can trigger damage to other organs such as the eyes, kidneys, nerves, heart, and the peripheral vascular system.³¹

In this context, the main focus is the correspondence between the sequence in the Qur'anic verse and the recommended sequence of food consumption for human health. Researchers around the world continue developing effective, efficient, and appropriate meal-ordering models for diabetes patients to control postprandial blood glucose. Eating-sequence modification—such as consuming vegetables or protein before rice—developed by Japanese researchers has shown that it slows the spike in blood glucose after meals.³² The type of nutrient consumed before the main carbohydrate intake affects gastric emptying, satiety, insulin secretion, and other digestive hormones. Thus, indirectly, this serves as an affirmation from the fields of health and nutrition toward Qur'anic interpretation, particularly QS. Al-Wāqi'ah [56]: 20–21.

Further interpretation of QS. Al-Wāqi'ah [56]: 20–21 is supported by medical research showing that fruit is recommended as a snack for diabetes patients. The fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants in fruit influence satiety and blood glucose levels.³³ Manipulating the order of food intake (vegetables, fruit, and protein before staple carbohydrates) has been shown to increase satiety and produce more ideal, stable postprandial glucose levels.

²⁵ Brown, Judith E., *Nutrition Through the Life Cycle*, 7th ed. (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2020), 12.

²⁶ Dwipajati, Sutomo Rum, *Pembatasan Porsi Nasi dan Konsumsi Buah Sebelum Makan dengan Kadar HbA1c dan Lemak Perut Penderita Diabetes Mellitus Tipe-2 di Kota Malang*, Amerta Nutrition Vol. 8 Issue 1, Maret 2024, 58.

²⁷ Yang, C.-H.; Chang, C.-W.; Lin, J. *White Rice Glycemic Index Measured in Venous and Capillary Blood Samples*. Food Sci. Technol. Res. 2017, 23, 297–304.

²⁸ Boers, H.M.; Hoorn, J.S.T.; Mela, D.J. *A systematic review of the influence of rice characteristics and processing methods on postprandial glycaemic and insulinemic responses*. Br. J. Nutr. 2015, 114, 1035–1045.

²⁹ Robert, S.D.; Ismail, A.A.-S.; Rosli, W.I.W. *Reduction of postprandial blood glucose in healthy subjects by buns and flatbreads incorporated with fenugreek seed powder*. Eur. J. Nutr. 2016, 55, 2275–2280.

³⁰ Ren, G.; Qi, J.; Zou, Y. *Association between intake of white rice and incident type 2 diabetes, An updated meta-analysis*. Diabetes Res. Clin. Pract. 2021, 172, 108651.

³¹ Dwipajati, Sutomo Rum, *Pembatasan Porsi Nasi dan Konsumsi Buah Sebelum Makan dengan Kadar HbA1c dan Lemak Perut Penderita Diabetes Mellitus Tipe-2 di Kota Malang*, Amerta Nutrition Vol. 8 Issue 1, Maret 2024, 58.

³² Kubota, S. et al. *A Review of Recent Findings on Meal Sequence: An Attractive Dietary Approach to Prevention and Management of Type 2 Diabetes*. Nutrients 12, 2020, 2502.

³³ Abdul Hakim, *Effect of Sequence of Fruit Intake in a Meal on Satiety*. IJERPH 16, 2019, 4464.

Consuming fruit before meals, in its various forms, has been proven to reduce hunger and overall food intake compared to no pre-meal consumption.³⁴ Other studies have also found that regulating meal sequence can enhance satiety and optimize glycemic control.³⁵

A study examined the effects of incorporating apples into the meal sequence. In this experiment, researchers tested how consuming apples in various forms before a meal (preload)—including whole apples, applesauce, and apple juice—would influence satiety and energy intake during the meal. The results showed significant differences in post-consumption satiety levels. Overall, eating whole apples produced a greater sense of fullness compared to applesauce or apple juice. These findings indicate that fruit in solid form has a stronger impact on satiety than when it is puréed or juiced, and that consuming fruit at the beginning of a meal can help reduce overall energy intake.³⁶

A dietary pattern in which carbohydrates are consumed last has been shown to produce lower postprandial glucose levels compared to patterns in which carbohydrates are consumed first or eaten together with all other food components. A study conducted in Malaysia on adults who consumed fruit before meals reported a higher satiety response compared to when fruit was eaten after the meal.³⁷ Similar results were found in an experiment involving adults in New Zealand who consumed kiwi fruit before eating cereal; the findings revealed increased satiety and a reduction in glycemic response by nearly 50%.³⁸ Dietary fiber can influence the viscosity of ingested food or chyme. A more viscous chyme slows digestion and absorption, thereby enhancing satiety and causing a gradual increase in postprandial blood glucose. Fiber also has the ability to slow the rate of glucose absorption after meals, which results in a lower blood glucose response curve and consequently affects insulin demand.³⁹

Conclusion

From the foregoing explanation, it is evident that this study concludes that the interpretation of QS. Al-Wāqi‘ah [56]: 20–21 by classical and modern exegetes shows a notable relevance to nutritional health, as supported by scientific research in the field. Tafsir scholars maintain that fruit is mentioned before meat because it is lighter, descends more quickly from the stomach, is easier to digest, and is generally healthier than meat. This is

³⁴ Flood-Obbagy, J.E.; Rolls, B.J. *The effect of fruit in different forms on energy intake and satiety at a meal*. Appetite 2009, 52, 5-6.

³⁵ Tricò, D.; Filice, E.; Trifirò, S.; Natali, A. *Manipulating the sequence of food ingestion improves glycemic control in type 2 diabetic patients under free-living conditions*. Nutr. Diabetes 2016, 6, e226.

³⁶ Flood-Obbagy, J.E.; Rolls, B.J. *The effect of fruit in different forms on energy intake and satiety at a meal*. Appetite 2009, 52, 1.

³⁷ Shukla, A.P.; Iliescu, R.G.; Thomas, C.E.; Aronne, L.J. *Food order has a significant impact on postprandial glucose and insulin levels*. Diabetes Care 2015, 38, e98–e99.

³⁸ Mishra, S., *Food Order and Timing Effects on Glycaemic and Satiety Responses to Partial Fruit-for-Cereal Carbohydrate Exchange: A Randomized Cross-Over Human Intervention Study*. Nutrients 15, 2023, 3269.

³⁹ Goff, H.D., *Dietary fibre for glycaemia control: Towards a mechanistic understanding*. Bioactive Carbohydrates and Dietary Fibre 14, 39-53 (2018).

corroborated by nutritional science, particularly through research from Japan demonstrating that modifying the eating sequence by consuming vegetables and protein before carbohydrates, can slow the postprandial rise in blood glucose levels. Similarly, a study from Malaysia that placed fruit at the beginning of the meal sequence also showed higher satiety responses compared to when fruit was consumed after meals. These findings highlight an important insight: Qur'anic interpretations, when read contextually, have the potential to offer practical solutions to contemporary health challenges. Consequently, the meaning embodied in these verses may serve as a constructive dietary model that contributes to improved nutritional well-being.

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