



# The Olive

## *A Divine Fruit*

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*Compiled by*  
*Hafiz Ather Hussain*



There are only a handful of fruits that Allāh has mentioned by name in the Holy Qur’ān; grapes, bananas, dates, pomegranates, figs and olives. Of these fruits, figs and olives hold a higher rank, for Allāh takes an oath with them. At the beginning of *Sūrah al-Tīn*, Allāh states:

والتين والزيتون وطور سينين وهذا البلد الأمين

*‘By the fig and by the olive. And by Mount Sinai and by this secure city [Makka]’ (95:1-3).*<sup>1</sup>

Sayyidunā Ibn ‘Abbās – may Allāh be pleased with both of them – states that *‘by the olive’ (zaytūn)* is in fact a reference to al-Masjid al-Aqṣā in Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> So, Allāh is taking an oath with this sacred place. This makes perfect sense, for the region of Palestine is rich with the production of olives, with many farms and land dedicated to its production. *Barakah* (blessing) has always been associated with al-Quds. In the Qur’ān, Allāh describes al-Masjid al-Aqṣā as the mosque surrounded by *barakah* (17:1). Olive trees are also blessed and full of *barakah* for Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:

كلوا الزيت وادهنوا به فإنه من شجرة مباركة

*‘Eat olive [oil] and anoint yourselves with it, for it comes from a blessed tree.’*<sup>3</sup>

He ﷺ loved olives and asked Muslims to seek good health from its immeasurable benefits. The learned have stated that olive oil holds the cure

1 The olive tree is also mentioned in *Sūrah al-Mu’minūn* (23:20) where Allāh states *‘And a tree (olive) that springs forth from Mount Sinai, that produces oil and is a relish for the eaters.’*

2 *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī* (20:75).

3 *Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ*, Book of foods.

to over seventy illnesses.<sup>4</sup> Thanks to modern scientific research, we are in a better position to understand its vast array of benefits:

- Consuming olive oil protects against obesity and type 2 diabetes (T2D).<sup>5</sup> One extensive research in January 2022 showed that olive oil consumption was associated with a 22% lower relative risk of T2D.
- Regular consumption of olives are scientifically proven to help fight cardiovascular diseases.<sup>6</sup> They are rich in mono unsaturated fatty acids and in antioxidants. Scientific studies have proven that olive oil lowers overall cholesterol levels and levels of bad cholesterol.<sup>7</sup>
- Because olives delay the hardening of the arteries, it can stop heart attacks and heart disease.<sup>8</sup>
- Breast cancer amongst women is unfortunately common today. Studies have shown there is a link between dietary fat and breast cancer. Doctors have discovered that extra-virgin olive oil (EVOO) can potentially provide a chemo-preventive effect.<sup>9</sup>
- Olive oil is excellent for the stomach. It keeps the bowel healthy, soothes pain and removes bacteria to be found in the stomach.<sup>10</sup> Modern doctors agree, for they have stated that the health of the gut microbiota and the intestinal environment is very pivotal in preventing obesity, metabolic

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4 *The Prophetic Sunnah – A Complete Way of Life*. Maulana Mohammad Shakir Noorie. Idārah Ma'ārif-e-Islāmī Publications, 2016 (p. 651).

5 *Effect of olive oil consumption on cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and all-cause mortality; a systematic review and meta-analysis* (National Library of Medicine, Dec 2022) <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36343558/>.

6 Any disease involving the heart or blood vessels.

7 *Effect of olive oil consumption on cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and all-cause mortality; a systematic review and meta analysis* (National Library of Medicine, Dec 2022) <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36343558/>.

8 High consumption of olive oil, and in particular the extra-virgin, which is rich in phenolic antioxidants, has been suggested to prevent against coronary heart disease (CHD). Please see *Olive Oil Intake and Cardiovascular Disease Prevention: "Seek and You Shall Find"* (National Library of Medicine, May 2021), <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33961163/>

9 *Olive oil and other dietary lipids in breast cancer* (National Library of Medicine, Oct 2013) <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24114487/>.

10 As-Suyuti's, *Medicine of the Prophet* ﷺ. Imam Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti. Ta-Ha Publishers, London 2009 (p. 67).

disease and even certain neurodegenerative conditions (like Alzheimer's Disease). They also agree that the regular use of extra-virgin olive oil (EVOO) is excellent in providing better cardiovascular, metabolic and cognitive health.<sup>11</sup>

- Olive oil is excellent for hair loss, as it fortifies the hair. When orange peel is boiled in olive oils, the mixture helps to cure scaly legs and hair loss.<sup>12</sup>
- Olive oil is known to be a hot substance so it is a good cure to colds.<sup>13</sup>
- A diet based on olives and olive oil is excellent in combatting old age. It helps to strengthen the limbs and it is a great cure to arthritis. Mediterraneans are known to live healthier lives in old age. One of the reasons is because olives form a very important part of their diet.

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ advised rubbing the limbs and joints with olive oil, stating that *Shaytān* does not approach one who anoints himself with olive oil.<sup>14</sup>

- Olive oil is proving to be an excellent means in fighting cancer. Research has shown that regular use of olive oil can stop the cancer of the colon, uterus and ovary.<sup>15</sup>
- Green olives, which are cold and dry, are an aphrodisiac.<sup>16</sup>




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11 *Extra-virgin olive oil and the gut-brain axis: influence on gut microbiota, mucosal immunity, and cardiometabolic and cognitive health in Nutrition Reviews* (79(12):1362-1374).

12 As-Suyuti's, *Medicine of the Prophet* ﷺ. Imam Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti. Ta-Ha Publishers, London 2009 (p. 106).

13 *The Prophetic Sunnah - A Complete Way of Life*. Maulana Mohammad Shakir Noorie. Idārah Ma'ārif-e-Islāmī Publications, 2016 (p. 651).

14 As-Suyuti's, *Medicine of the Prophet* ﷺ. Imam Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti. Ta-Ha Publishers, London 2009 (p. 66).

15 This is according to research conducted by the Institute of Atherosclerosis at the University of Munster (Germany). Cited in *Islamic Medicine - The Key to a Better Life*. Yusuf al-Hajj Ahmed. Darussalam Publications, 2010 (p. 145).

16 As-Suyuti's, *Medicine of the Prophet* ﷺ. Imam Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti. Ta-Ha Publishers, London 2009 (p. 67).

اللهم صَلِّ على سيدنا و مولانا محمدٍ عددَ أوراق الزَّيتون و جميع الثمار

O Allāh! Send blessings upon our Master Muhammad in quantity as great as the leaves of the olive tree and all the fruits (*Dalā'il al-Khayrāt*).



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