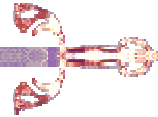


VEGETARIANISM

© Richard Andrew King

"THOU SHALT NOT KILL"

Bible - Exodus: 20:13



"*Thou shalt not kill.*" This is really the crux of the matter. If we desire to truly *live*, and if we believe in and follow what Christ and all Saints have told us regarding the Great Law of this creation, namely, "*as you sow so shall you reap*" — the Law of Cause and Effect, the Law of Compensation and Adjustment, the Law of Action and Reaction, the Law of Karma, then we have no choice. If we kill, we will be killed. It is really that simple. An eye for an eye is the law of this creation, and if we take an eye, one will be taken from us; if we inflict hurt on others, hurt will be inflicted on us; if we kill, we will be killed. How simple a truth this is and yet how ignored it is.

How can we truly LIVE if we are putting death in our bodies? It is a contradiction of behavior. If part of our life goal is to lead a quality *LIFE*, then how can we possibly do that if we are constantly ingesting death? It makes absolutely no sense. Death is death. Life is life. We do not get life from death. We get death from death; life from life. We all are so intent on living life, but yet we overlook the most fundamental of concepts— that we cannot live life by living on death. Still, we do it every day, meal after meal, piece of decaying flesh after piece of decaying flesh; rotten carcass after rotten carcass; death after death.

Then, almost incredulously, when we experience pain, suffering, sorrow, torment, anguish and disease, we cry out, "Why me, Lord?" Because, when we kill, when we inflict pain, suffering, sorrow, torment and anguish on others, even if they are other living beings such as animals, we **MUST**, by natural law receive the same. No one escapes this factual ingredient of existence.

As Saint Ravidas states:

"Whatever thou hast sewn, the same shalt thou reap. No change in this can there ever be."

When we sow death, we must reap death. It is axiomatic.

GOLDEN RULE

Most of us believe in the Golden Rule — "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." But do we really *live* the Golden Rule? Or do we really just give it lip service? Perhaps it would be more useful and practical if the Golden Rule were modified to the following:

*"Do unto others as you would have them do unto you
because as you do unto others, it will be done unto you!"*

Reading it this way would make much more sense and be more spiritually accurate. The first line makes the Golden Rule a nice philosophy. The second line, however, makes it a law! A law, by the way, which all Saints have said is unquestionably true.

There is a belief that it's okay to eat meat because animals don't have souls. Masters tell us that all living things possess soul—the essence of the God Force—and that includes animals as well as plants. Without soul, we could not live and, in fact, when we die, we do so because the soul current vacates the body. Without the soul force in the body, any body, that body could not live. Subsequently, when we sin against the soul energy, when we misuse or abuse it, there are consequences to pay, harvests to reap; harvests whose essence is fabricated on what was originally sewn. We cannot reap oranges if we plant limes. We cannot reap wheat if we plant corn. Likewise, we cannot reap health and life when we plant death.

LIFE SUBSTANCE

So if all living things contain soul, what is the difference between eating animals and eating vegetables? In both cases there is killing. Yes. True. The difference, however, is one of degree. It's the difference between tasting a pinch of salt and consuming a pound of it, if that were possible. We can taste a pinch of salt with no significant negative consequences, but if we were to consume a pound of it, it would probably kill us.

It's like that with eating vegetables and animals. Vegetables have very little 'life force' in them, but animals have a great deal. Spiritually, there is penalty in both cases for we must reap what we sow; we must pay for the killing we created. The difference is that because vegetables have little life force in them, the penalty is far less than that of animals which contain a great deal of life force.

If we were to steal an apple from our neighbor by picking it off his tree, he may be a little displeased. If we were to kill his bird, his anger would probably flare; kill his dog and the penalties become even greater. If we were to kill him, our own life could be taken. Therefore, killing is one of degree, and the consequences, the disciplinary action, the penalties and punishments manifest in degree as well. The greater the crime, the greater the time. The greater the action, the greater the reaction. The greater the product, the greater the price. It's no mystery, and it certainly isn't a rocket scientist thing. It is just simple logic.

FAMOUS VEGETARIANS

There have been many distinguished and famous people in history who have refused to eat meat — the carcasses of slain animals. The famous English writer of the Twentieth Century, George Bernard Shaw, has poetically stated:

We are the living graves of murdered beasts slaughtered to satisfy our appetites.

Obviously, Shaw's disdain of and revulsion to killing animals to consume their flesh is quite clear from this couplet. Yet, his sentiments are not singular. Below is a list of many great and notable historical figures who were, or were sympathetic to, a vegetarian diet.

LIST OF FAMOUS VEGETARIANS

Mahatma Gandhi, Albert Schweitzer, Leo Tolstoy, Albert Einstein, Henry David Thoreau, Leonardo de Vinci, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Richard Wagner, Francois Voltaire, Arthur Schopenhauer, Plato, Paganini, Socrates, Nietzsche, Maurice Maeterlinck, Horace Greeley.

This is quite an impressive list to be sure. If these famous, accomplished and outstanding historical figures refrained from eating meat, why can't we? Why did they? Why does anyone choose not to consume the dead and putrefying flesh that is carrion?

REASONS FOR CHOOSING TO BE A VEGETARIAN

There are at least five major reasons why people choose to be vegetarian. Not all vegetarians subscribe to the same reasons but they do have one thing in common — they just don't believe in eating flesh; in killing, slaughtering, contracting to slaughter, consuming or ingesting anything that ever had a heartbeat, a face or a mother.

The health benefits of being a vegetarian are a primary reason for following this plant-based regimen. A vegetarian diet, if followed properly, is highly nutritious, clean, physiologically efficient and economically sensible — individually and collectively. Vegetarians, as science will eventually prove, have more energy, fewer illnesses, calmer dispositions, faster healing rates and slower aging rates than their omnivorous, meat eating counterparts.

Meat contains many negative substances as far as health is concerned. Uric acid, steroids, antibiotics, penicillin, fattening agents and poisons are contained in meat. These substances can stay in the body for long periods of time and actually contribute to the dis-ease of the consumer. Meat is also much harder to digest than vegetarian foods, remains in the body longer and, frankly, is simply vile and dirty. It is a wonder why it is still consumed by civilized people. Perhaps, one day, the eating of meat will be looked upon from a historical viewpoint with the same disdain and ill repute as blood-letting once was in the healing of the body — an act performed by men of science, doctors of that day and age.

A second reason is that some people just don't like the taste, texture or smell of meat. How fortunate for these souls. In fact, some people on this planet have been born and died, lived from cradle to grave, without ever having ingested even the smallest amount of animal flesh. Perhaps these are the souls who became vegetarians in their last incarnation and remained so in this one.

Thirdly, some people simply can't handle meat. Their bodies do not digest or assimilate it well. Lucky them. Such forced and involuntary vegetarianism is more of a blessing than perhaps even they realize.

One of the more important reasons, however, for becoming a vegetarian is the philosophical aspect of killing creatures to satisfy our appetites. Vegetarians have always lived extremely well and healthy without harming or destroying other creatures. When animals die, they suffer. Anyone who has ever had a household pet knows how 'human' animals can be. Perhaps they once were human. Notwithstanding this consideration, animals don't want to die. Yet, they do — by the millions, daily. Why? Because another creature, man, wants to eat them.

Isn't it highly insensitive, cold and hard-hearted to kill? How soft, tender and loving is not the heart that slaughters for its nutritional requirements, especially when it has better and healthier alternatives? Doesn't it seem rather primitive, animalistic and uncivilized for us to slay creatures for the sake of gnawing on their bones, slurping up their blood and tearing their decaying flesh with our teeth? How romantic is it to partake of a warm, loving, soft, music-drenched, candlelit dinner while gormandizing and masticating upon the dead, rotting, decaying and decomposing carcass of some creature which once was alive and not only had feelings and emotions but also had a mother, father and possibly even siblings?

Furthermore, how about our bodies being used as graveyards for murdered beasts? What a noble and grand testimony this is for man! Can he not put something in his body besides rotting flesh and putrefying blood? Is this the level to which he has elevated himself? Or lowered himself? Is this his grand and noble legacy — to spend his life filling his belly full of death? What a delightfully spiritual and enlightened thought this is! When he is laid to rest, how shall man's epitaph read?

*Here lies man—the enlightened one—who sought life, love,
light, and goodness for all creatures great and small*

or

*Here lies man the destroyer, who lived by death, hate,
darkness, suffering and the slaughtering of helpless
creatures placed in his dominion and under his care.*

These are brutal comments to be sure. But so is killing. It is a brutal act. If we had no other food to eat for survival, perhaps we would be justified in slaughtering animals for our sustenance. But such is not the case. As a world, we have grown immensely technological. Yet, for all our modern wizardry, we are still gnawing on bones. Take away the forks, spoons, knives, plates and microwave ovens from our comfortable, everyday, 'civilized' environments and we could be watching the launching of a rocket ship while sitting around a campfire with the fire stained skin of some slain beast pressed to our lips with the blood and fat of its flesh dripping down our cheeks. And this is what we refer to as civilized behavior, a civilized society?

The fifth major reason for becoming a vegetarian is the karmic connection. As we sow, we reap. As we kill, we must be killed. As we create pain and suffering, so must we suffer. As we perform the acts of animals, so must we become an animal. The Law of Compensation and Adjustment, the Law of Sowing and Reaping, the Law of Cause and Effect, the Law of Karma is exactly that . . . law. It is not philosophy. It is not fantasy. It is not theory. It cannot be invalidated by belief, cast off with a joke or denied by will. We will get what we deserve. We will get exactly what we choose and what we have chosen. We will pay or be paid for what we have done.

When the Grim Reaper comes, the reaping . . . and weeping . . . will definitely begin. And no concern will be given to our tears. We cannot escape the energies we have generated and cast upon the winds of the great cosmic stage. Our energy babies, full grown into adulthood, will find us — with absolutely no difficulty whatsoever. When they return to collect from us the funds needed to pay the Piper or balance the debts we've created, we will be helpless to defend ourselves. If we have killed, created pain and suffering, we won't like the payback for it will be in kind. If one plants corn seeds, one reaps corn. If one plants wheat, wheat is reaped. If one plants death, one does not get life unless it's life in prison.

The understanding of this understanding should be enough to permanently alter the moment-to-moment, day-to-day behavior of any sensitive and sentient spiritual soul. The fear alone of the great karmic tidal waves we've created returning upon us should shake anyone up who thinks this through. It's a voluminously heavy thought and it carries voluminously heavy consequences. In fact, if mankind acted on and lived in the consciousness of the great law of karma, such action would instantly revolutionize the earth. However, for the perception of the great law to revolutionize each of us is enough. Our journeys through this creation are, ultimately, solo experiences. We are only responsible for our own behavior and actions. Therefore, let the changes begin with us on an individual basis. We cannot change the world but we can change ourselves.

JESUS AS A VEGETARIAN

When we think of the Divine Diet of vegetarianism, we think of divine souls, spiritual souls, souls living, breathing and expressing the God Force. This, of course, begs the question, "Was Jesus the Christ a vegetarian?" In answering this controversial question, let's recall the list of famous historical figures who have been vegetarians. A few from that list were Albert Einstein, Mahatma Gandhi, Albert Schweitzer, Leonardo de Vinci, St. Francis of Assisi, Aristotle, Plato and Socrates.

The reputations of these souls are well known. They were men of extreme accomplishment and clearly distinguished themselves as exceptional human beings. It is safe to say that these men not only attained enormous status in their fields and stature among humans, but they also expressed a relatively high level of enlightenment. Yet, it is also probably safe to say that compared to Jesus the Christ, they were not as evolved spiritually. So, the question must be asked: "If these great and evolved souls were vegetarians, if they chose not to kill, slaughter and eat the flesh of animals because of their elevated state of consciousness, their tender-heartedness, their disdain for destruction and reverence for all life, how could one such as the Christ — so much more highly evolved — express lesser thought and action?" Thus, the issue is not if Jesus were a vegetarian. The question is, "How could he not have been?"

Besides these greatly distinguished historical personages, there have been and currently are millions of souls on this planet, human and animal, who are also vegetarians. In fact, some of the biggest and strongest creatures on the earth are in this category — elephants, oxen, gorillas, giraffes, cattle and horses. Why would millions of souls throughout time on this little insignificant planet alone choose not to eat meat? And, therefore, how could a professed Son of God do otherwise? It makes absolutely no sense whatsoever. If we take a simple, cursory look at the nature of Jesus the Christ, we see an extremely evolved soul, a Son of God who loved and lived love. He was kind, kingly, divine. His life's work was about elevating the consciousness of those souls who followed him. It was not about killing, hurting, maiming, destroying, creating pain and suffering for its own sake. It was about saving souls, severing their attachment to this world and liberating them from the bondage of this earth.

Furthermore, Jesus not only knew the Great Law of karma, he taught it. It was his interpretation of the Law of Compensation and Adjustment as that of sowing and reaping that is still with us today. He believed in the commandments of not killing, committing adultery, fornicating, stealing or hurting others. Here was a grand Soul who preached that the meek shall inherit the earth. Here was a Son of God who taught that one cannot serve two masters — God and mammon. Here was a Divine Being whose life was about Light, not darkness; Life, not death; who taught that God is a Spirit and that the desires of the flesh were of the devil, the Negative power. How in His Kingdom, therefore, could such a Son of God slay animals, eat their flesh and support the very force which he spent his entire life and lifeblood opposing? To reiterate, then, the germane question is not whether Jesus the Christ, Son of God, was a vegetarian. It is, most emphatically, "How could he not have been?"

Now for those who question, who doubt the plausibility of this argument, there is a test. It is simple. It is not philosophic. It is experiential. It is this — become a vegetarian. Walk the path. Live the life. Experience the changes in consciousness. Observe the spiritual growth. Feel the body's vibratory state become finer and calmer. Do it. And do it for years — five, ten, fifteen, twenty years. Do it for a lifetime. Walk in the shoes of those who refuse to kill, slay and slaughter animals for the meat that is their flesh, who refuse to eat that meat, who refuse to associate with such negativity. Don't judge it, criticize it, condemn it. Don't talk it. Walk it! Then, when the experiment is over, try to return to an omnivorous diet. It will be like bathing in a dung heap. Not only will eating meat be repugnant, it will be impossible.

It is ignorant and foolish to deny the experiences and revelations of those who have climbed the mountain when we have never climbed it and, in fact, are still immersed in the Valley of the Shadow of Death below. Knowledge gained as a result of personal experience is, unquestionably, superior to that acquired from books, papers, documents or word of mouth. Experience always has been and will always be the very best teacher. Make the commitment. Climb the mountain. Live the life. Learn the truth and don't just talk it. Walk it! And when that is all said and done, if there is still a need, ask the question to the image in the mirror, "Was Christ a vegetarian?" The answer will surely be, "How could he not have been!"

VEGETARIAN TYPES

A vegetarian is a person who does not eat anything that ever had a heartbeat, a face or a mother. In other words, no animal flesh in the least. Someone who claims to be a vegetarian but eats fish or fowl, for example, is not a vegetarian but an omnivore with a qualified diet. Omnivores eat plant life and flesh. For carnivores, meat is the mainstay of their diet. There are three general types of vegetarians. They are: 1. Vegan 2. Lacto 3. Ovo-lacto

"Vegan" describes one who eats no animal products at all. This includes abstention from eggs, egg whites and all dairy products. 'Vegans' comprise the strictest type of vegetarians. "Lacto" references those vegetarians who include dairy in their diet but no eggs or egg whites. "Ovo-lacto" is that group which includes eggs and dairy. They comprise the largest class of vegetarians. However, no vegetarian consumes any product whose ingredients are derived from the flesh of living creatures. Cautious vegetarians even avoid soups and broths made with beef or chicken bases and foods containing gelatin which is made by boiling animal remains.

Vegetarians are growing in number. Because of the many salutary benefits of this dietary regimen, it is not inconceivable to consider that eventually more people will be 'veg-heads' than 'flesh-heads'. It is simply a process of education and experience and wanting to live a healthy and spiritually whole life. Being a vegetarian, once heralded as strange and weird, is now quite accepted. With the relative abundance of non-meat foods and products on the market today, a number that is growing rapidly, it is easy to make the switch. All one has to do is overcome the inertia of his conditioning — not a difficult task when one considers the trade-off and benefits of the transaction.

SUMMARY

From a spiritual viewpoint, it is no small thing to be a vegetarian. After all, in light of the law of karma, it is the entrapment of the soul which is at stake. If we kill, we must be killed. There are few acts which guarantee our enslavement and imprisonment in this nether land more than the eating of animal flesh. Spiritual evolution mandates purity. A vegetarian diet is the purest and most practical nutritional regimen for the Path traveler. We must eat to live so ingesting only those foods which contain the least amount of spiritual substance accruing the least amount of negative karma, is certainly the most spiritually beneficial diet we can follow. Vegetarianism is a diet rich in rewards. It is materially and spiritually efficient. It benefits each of us in our quest to live in the Light. It benefits society as a whole. It is that diet which He demands if we're ever to merge in Him and, therefore, it can only be called . . . divine!

~ finis

© Richard Andrew King