

Slaughterhouses in the Kingdom of Heaven (Vegetarianism in the Bible)

By Dr. Van Beveren

There has been a great standing controversy regarding religious meat-eaters and those who claim there is a distinct spiritual advantage to being a vegetarian. Seldom has this debate been brought to the pulpit since the vast majority of religious leaders are loath to give up the flesh pots.

IF you firmly believe that true and total one-ness with God cannot be attained while we are the living (or rather dying) graveyards for our fellow creatures then you must also believe that meat eating - while once necessary and permitted - is now no longer a necessity. The difficulty anyone experiences in making the transition from a meat-centered diet to a plant-centered diet is not nearly as challenging as it may seem and more than worth the many rewards. Yet there are those who fail because they are unaware of some simple but important facts. The radiant health one enjoys is not just physical. True, the immediate rewards are higher energy level, cleaner digestive system, increased mental clarity, sweeter body odor, better excretion, higher sex drive and the list goes on and on....

The real advantage underlies the fact that "we are what we assimilate". Thousands of years ago Yoga sages realized the influence of food on our mind and our consciousness and that the entire universe is the result of vibrations that ultimately touches our consciousness and our conscience. In this multifarious universe of waves what we euphemistically call "matter" we are all vibrating frequencies from the gross to the subtle. Everything is permeated with their own set of vibrations that, as a standing wave, defines not only our character but also our spiritual potential. All foods are also the recipient of their own set of vibrations affecting both the body, and by default, the mind. The ancient seers categorized food into three subsets:

1) the sentient force and sentient foods which carry the forces of self-awareness, love, peace, purity and joy allowing us to feel peaceful, relaxed and calm and could take our minds to the highest levels of consciousness and self-realization. They have the highest amounts of enzymes, minerals and other nutrients that are the simplest and the most undifferentiated.

2) the mutative force and mutative foods which carry the forces of movement, change, agitation, nervousness, restlessness and stimulation. These foods make it impossible to still the mind long enough for subtle mental pursuits - such as deep prayer, meditation, concentration and focus. In this state it takes effort to maintain mental balance and to quiet the racing mind. These are the cooked foods, the spices, the carbonated drinks, the dairy foods, the processed, refined foods and the adrenal-stimulating drugs.

3) the static force and the static foods carry the forces of dullness, inertia, decay, lethargy, drowsiness and death. This near frozen vibration occurs when the other two have reached their nadir and the static force is the main operating entity. By the choice of foods the mind chooses to remain sleepy, listless, lacking in energy, momentum and initiative. The static entities include meats, mushrooms, alcohol, stale or spoiled foods, rancid oils and chemicals.

I believe that we are all on a journey from paradise to paradise through a series of 7 periods.

PERIOD 1) Fruits were the original diet as recorded in Genesis 1:29 and Genesis 2:16 In order to know which are the best food for man made in the image of God - we must study God's original plan for mankind. He who created man and who understands his needs appointed Adam his food. By doing this God showed which is the best designed food for eternal life. It was only thru food-lust that Adam and Eve lost the ability to sustain themselves on living Paradisical fruit.

Eventually this is where all God's children will want to return. In the meantime we may safely assume that this original diet is ample - at least under the conditions of Eden. There is no reason to believe that from a physiological stand-point any greater modification is required than was afterwards made by God.

PERIOD 2) When leaving Eden to labor for his livelihood (by tilling the earth) under the curse of sin, man received permission to eat "the herbs of the field". Genesis 3:17 & 18. Before this time God had given man no permission to eat his creation - animals, instead He intended that the humanity should wholly subsist on the production of the earth. Before flesh foods were introduced (before the flood made it crucial to eat animals) there were 9 (nine!) generations who lived an average of 912 years. Adam lived 930 years and Noah lived 950. Methuselah 969 years. This is the aftermath and result of a total vegan diet in an almost pristine world still lingering in the perfume of Paradise.

PERIOD 3) Flesh foods were (reluctantly) allowed (Genesis 9:3) and mankind was given permission to eat God's creation but not without a curse: Genesis 9:2 & 5. Not until after the flood when every green thing on the earth had been destroyed, did man receive permission to eat animal flesh. After the flood meat-eating was allowed to shorten the life span of the human race so he would not live long in sin. The average age was severely reduced to a little more than 300 years over a period of 10 generations. Seth, Noah's son, was 600 years and Abraham - 10 generations later - a mere 175 years. There is no Biblical ground for supposing that man's physiology has undergone any changes that makes necessary - on the basis of actual natural need - the use of flesh as food.

PERIOD 4) Trying to show the way back to Paradise God showed what was the best diet for "His" people in the desert. In his choice of Manna God taught the same lesson: simplicity in eating. But they were unwilling to submit to God's requirements and they failed to reach the standards He had set for them - and to receive the blessings that might have been theirs - disguised as another curse: "and I will visit the iniquities of they children upon thy children's children unto the 3rd and 4th generation" - a disguised promise that we can reverse our condition in just 3 or 4 generations. The journey of the people of Israel from Egypt to Canaan is a metaphor for the people of God - consider these questions and their answers:

- 1) Under which condition could the Israelites remain healthy? Exodus 15:26
- 2) Who asked for meat and why? What is the lust for meat? Numbers 11:14, Romans 7:7
- 3) Whom did the Israelites reject by their demand for meat? Numbers 11:20
- 4) What was the result of their meat eating? Verses 33 and 34
- 5) What did Paul have to say concerning this experience? I Corinthians 10:6 & 11
- 6) What was shown to John and what was the fulfillment of it? Revelation 11:9
- 7) What objects are in the Ark of the Covenant? Hebrew 9:4
- 8) To which way of living should the pot of Manna remind us? Exodus 16: 32-35
- 9) How many of the old Israelites entered Canaan? Numbers 14: 29 & 30

Whatever Bible toleration or authority there may be for eating flesh is evidently not for the purpose of encouraging the use of such as a regular article of diet. Although the Israelites upon their settlement in the land of Milk and Honey were permitted the use of animals as food it was under carefully thought-out restrictions which tended to lessen the consequences of their barbarism. Of the meat that was permitted the blood and fat was strictly forbidden. To comply fully with the instructions covering its use would mean that no meat could be consumed unless the blood had been carefully drained and all the fat removed - which left little flavor appeal.

PERIOD 5) By ignoring the divine plan for their diet the Israelites suffered great losses. They demanded a flesh diet and they reaped the results. They never reached God's ideal of character so they were never allowed to fulfill His purpose. Yet meat eating was allowed. Let's look at some of the prophets and what they ate:

ELIJAH:

Bread, Meat and Water 1 Kings 17: 1-6

Bread, Oil and Water 1 Kings 17: 8-16

Finally, just bread and Water 1 Kings 19: 4-8

DANIEL & FRIENDS:

"let them give us pulse to eat and water to drink" Daniel 1:12 In this historical event we can almost hear the whisper of God addressing us individually bidding us gather up all precious rays of light upon the subject of Christian temperance and place ourselves in right relation to the laws of health.

JOHN THE BAPTIST:

John, in preparation for the meeting with Christ, separated himself from his friends and from the luxuries of life dwelling alone in the wilderness and subsisting on a purely vegetarian diet

PAUL: "It is good not to eat flesh" Romans 14:21

CHRIST:

His way of life was prophesied in Isaiah : 37:14-15

Adam fell by the deliberate indulgence of appetite and Christ overcame by the denial of appetite. And our only hope of regaining Eden is through firm self-control.

PERIOD 6) This is the period of today - "the last days". Meat eating is rampant but in order for us to prepare our higher mind and to become aware of our lower selves - we are asked to follow the example of the great spiritual leaders, both men and women, who abstained from eating flesh to gain insight. Again and again the Bible proves to us that God is trying to lead us back into Given Original Design where man's food was the most natural and the least stimulating to the senses. It is difficult for me to accept that in the praise of killing animals we are in harmony with the the higher purpose(s) of God's plan.

PERIOD 7) And now we've returned to Paradise - the garden of Eden - in all its glory. I seriously doubt there will be flesh ripping here. No sounds of sorrow or smells of slaughterhouse deaths.

"On this side and on that side shall grow all trees for meat whose leaf shall not fade neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to its months". Isaiah: 47:12

"And they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruit of them" Isaiah:65:21

And who will eat from the tree of Life again? "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God" Revelation 2:7

"As far as possible articles of food are to be selected from among the sets of items where development of consciousness is comparatively little, i.e. if vegetables are available, animals should not be slaughtered. Secondly before killing any animal having developed or underdeveloped consciousness, consider over and over whether it is possible to live in a healthy body without taking such lives". P.R. Sarkar

Who were the vegetarians?: the early Greeks, Egyptians and Hebrew described human beings as fruit eaters in their literature.

The wise priest of Egypt never ate meat. Many early Greek sages - including Plato, Socrates, and Pythagoras - were strong advocates of vegetarianism. The great civilization of Inca Indians was based on a vegetable diet. In India, Buddha urged his disciples not to eat flesh. The Taoist saints and sages were vegetarians and the early Christians as well as the early Jews were also. The

Hindus always forbade meat eating and Manu, the first Hindu lawgiver wrote "meat can never be obtained without injury to living creatures and if one injures another conscious being one cannot attain bliss". The holy book of Islam, the Koran, prohibits the eating of "dead animals, blood and flesh..." One of the first and foremost disciples of Mohammed, his own nephew, advised his higher disciples "do not make your stomachs graves for animals".

Other famous vegetarians were Leonardo da Vinci, Alexander Pope, Sir Isaac Newton, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Voltaire, John Milton, Charles Darwin, Plutarch, Clement of Alexandria, Seneca, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Richard Wagner, Benjamin Franklin, Leo Tolstoy, Louisa May Alcott. H.G.Wells, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Mother Theresa, George Bernard Shaw, Albert Schweitzer, the Dalai Lama, Albert Einstein, Rudolph Steiner, Mary Baker Eddy, Joseph Schmidt, Yogananda, Ellen G. White, John Robins, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Cloris Leachman, Dick Gregory, Dr. Gordon Latta, Swami Satchidananda, Dr. Alan Long, Mary Feldman, Muriel, The Lady Dowding, Dennis Weaver, Bridget Brophy, Malcolm Muggeridge, Susan Saint James, Helen and Scott Nearing, etc. The list of screen actors, writers, philosophers, and athletes goes on and on. Why? Why are the great spiritual leaders of the world so bent on being vegetarian?

"Thou shalt not kill" does not refer to just man killing man because it is a principle not a command. It refers to all acts of injustices that shorten life. The indulgence of any passion that results in hatred, revenge and that lead to injurious acts toward others or even causes us to wish them harm - ("for whoso hateth his brother is a murderer") is included in this edict. The selfishness neglect of caring for the needy or suffering as a result of self-indulgence or unnecessary deprivation or excessive labor that tends to injure health - slow suicide included - are all, to a greater or lesser degree, violations of the sixth "commandment". You must remember that these were written by men and so they have taken a positive philosophy and twisted it into a negative commandment. This principle should really read that "all life is sacred and should be given the ultimate regard, respect and afforded the highest priority". But being men they doctored it into a negative affirmation.

It has been said that "god himself killed the first animal...to clothe him"

This is just a misunderstanding. Eve was clothed with leaves. The first killing, done by Able, pointed to the future sacrifice that one of God's sons would have to make. God never intended anything to die - let alone beings with consciousness. If animals were under instructions to be eaten they wouldn't have the wherewithal to run away or protect themselves from us. It has been said that: "we are now living under the grace of God - not the law of Moses". "Love your neighbor as yourself...."

And they would be right - but this saying does not absolve us from the response-ability that God gave us in the very beginning (Genesis) because God is the "same today, yesterday and forever". Sinners were saved by grace from day one - in all ages. Law and grace are not antagonistic. It is BECAUSE God's law is eternal and unchangeable (and demands a life if broken) that grace becomes necessary. God's unmerited favor was taught to Able in the sacrifice of the lamb and again to the Jews - where an innocent animal died in place of the sinner. Thus God cannot change. God is only Love and pure Love is a high and holy principle - altogether different from that "love" which reaches its highest pinnacle in lust and desire - then suddenly dies when severely tested. No, the injunction to "love our neighbor..." was a brand new idea to the disciples who, in light of Christ's ultimate sacrifice, were well aware that they had not "loved one another" like Christ had loved them. But Christ taught the perpetuity of the law.

So this "new" commandment takes nothing away from the old. Just as the admonition "thou shalt not commit adultery" included, but was not limited to adulterating one's cultural, or food genes - but indeed, it also refers to adulterating milk with water and numerous other "adulterations" that were going on at that time. Christ said that he had "not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it" - literally to "fill it full" - not to take it away but to complete the worlds' karma. Indeed, it strengthens and breathes new life in the old admonitions - but with a different twist, from more nobler motivations and reaching for higher spiritual principles. In other words Christ made the law of Moses a positive affirmation instead of a negative punishing order.

Thus nothing has changed. Killing is still killing. God's creatures are still God's creatures and dead is still dead. And I'm not writing this to judge anyone. "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again". Far from it. We are all on the same path and we are here to help each other and this is to help those who are ready to make the leap into a higher state of existence - who have hovered above the line of demarcation between regeneration and higher mind. Who are sick and tired of making their body a repository for rotting flesh.

"Being in the world but not of the world" - means not keeping yourself aloof from all those who are different from ourselves. Intermingling. Being part of the part(y). Being here in body but being higher in mind. Learning how to live in this world and at the same time living to learn in the next. It does not mean that it's now ok to kill animals because Christ gave us permission by doing away with the laws and we're under grace anyhow. Far from it. Grace does not destroy our obligation but rather puts a double obligation on us - for gratitude if nothing else. It is not only our duty to live according to Universal Principles but to be grateful for the sacrificial "freeing" (us) from the natural consequences of their violation.

Hope this helps (someone!).

Warmly,

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