

WHY TO BE VEGETARIAN?

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This question occupies many people who have begun their journey of enlarging the consciousness into the world of truth and spirituality. The way in which the question is formulated is from the point of view of the vegetarian. It is a question inviting to self-reflection. Explanations have to be given about the motives of one who lives on a vegetarian diet. This question could have been formulated in another way as "Why not to be vegetarian? " It would then have been the question posed by the non-vegetarian, who has not yet seen sufficient reasons to change his habits of meat eating.

Vegetarianism exists in many different forms. The most common are the vegetarians, who do not eat meat – or fishery products. There are many lacto-vegetarians, who use milk-products, and ovo-vegetarians, who use eggs, as well as non-meat eating vegetarians who eat fish. These last three categories can be seen as preliminary phases before one becomes a vegetarian. Most vegetarians though will continue to use milk products. Those vegetarians, who do not eat animal products, including milk products and honey, are called vegans. The Jains are vegans and they even do not eat roots, potatoes, carrots or entire plants, but often use milk.

When one becomes vegetarian, this can be from birth or at any later stage in life. For those, who are born vegetarians, the question usually does not arise. Those who become vegetarian later in their life can have different reasons. If it is for economic reasons, the question is not really important in the context of this article, which is proposed in the scope of the topics "Dialogue of cultures as a challenge of time" and "Ethical challenges and demands of modern society". Although in certain extremely rare cases of chosen poverty the vegetarian diet would have to be considered as to have been willingly included in the life resulting from the choice for poverty.

One person became vegetarian, because he was infertile and his physician had advised him a vegetarian diet in order to have children. Others, like athletes and persons, who practise competitive sport, become vegetarian, because they know that their results will become better. In

most cases the vegetarian diet is caused by the fact that, at a certain moment in life, the person has become conscious of moral values like respect for the life of sentient beings and the non-violence principle. In Indian philosophy this last principle is called "ahimsa". The Yagathattvopanishad states, that of the Yamas (interdictions) and the Ni-yamas (obligations) there are only two, which are important, the one being ahimsa and the other a dietary rule, which says, that if the yogi after having made progress, wants to become really successful, he should eat only cooked wheat, green gram and rice. This is one of the most extreme vegan diets. The Gnostics were vegetarians and most of them even vegans. Also the Nazarenes, who did not cut their hair and lived an ascetic life in the Middle-East during the time of Jesus Christ, were vegetarians. Jesus was a Nazarene, and if he was born, it was not in Nazareth, but in Bethlehem

Buddhists often follow a vegetarian diet. Jewish dietary rules say that if the Jew comes to a place and wants to eat meat, meat can be eaten, but the rules and conditions, which are then imposed, are so strict, that it would be easier to follow a vegetarian diet. The Baha'í's believe that in the future man will live on vegetarian diet. Catholics and Orthodox Christians fast before Easter and are used to follow the rule of not eating meat for one or two days a week. There seem to be several thousands of people, who claim to have stopped eating altogether, or to eat only very little and still survive physically, because they would have developed their higher faculties and be capable to transmute energies from higher planes to the physical world. Saint-Germain, the European Master, or Prince Rackosky, is said never to have been seen eating in public. For our common fellowmen, who become vegetarians the question why to become and remain vegetarian is really a question of conscience and consciousness. When a child becomes aware of how animals suffer when they are hunted and caught, or when they are kept in captivity and abused for the pleasure of man, it can easily develop an aversion against meat and fish. Many children even have such aversion by nature. It is sufficient to take a school class to visit a slaughterhouse or preferably show them a movie about such a terrible place to turn a significant number of them into vegetarians. There is one convincing, economic argument, which states, that to produce the same quantity of animal protein as vegetable protein the agricultural surface needed is about eight times bigger. Thus if the whole world would become vegetarian and estimating that for different reasons half of the world population is already eating no meat or almost no meat, four and a

half times more or over 30 billion people could be fed with the same agricultural surface, which now feeds 7.5 billion. Vegetarian lifestyle is more peaceful, not only because of the ahimsa, non-violence effect spreading out in the world, but also because the vegetarian becomes more apt for developing his individual spiritual consciousness. The more vegetarians there are, the more spiritualized will become the consciousness of Humanity as a whole. According to the ancient wisdom tradition, the animal kingdom will become the human kingdom during the next planetary chain, while the vegetable kingdom will become the animal kingdom. The brotherhood of man is in the light of this knowledge a much wider truth, which has to and can be experienced. Once this truth has become an experienced and empirical reality, the vegetarian humanity has no doubt about the fact that one does not want to consume one's own or one's own kind's flesh and blood. According to medical science the vegetarian diet is a healthy diet and even better for one's physical condition than a non-vegetarian diet. Many illnesses are connected to the overconsumption of animal products. The most important reason is the altruistic one. A person who is on a vegetarian diet can more easily purify his emotional and mental life and thus arrive at enlarging his consciousness into the realms of higher moral values and ideas, like e.g. brotherhood, humanity, love, harmony, charity, altruism, patience, indifference for pain and pleasure, strength to be faithful to the truth and living the one life self-consciously, not for oneself, but for the world, to which he experiences himself to be identical. One should eat moderately what is served choosing with appetite and keep in mind, that what is coming out of the mouth has more importance than what is going into it.