

# THE SPIRITUAL ASPECT OF THE VEGETARIAN DIET

SANT KIRPAL SINGH

**Karmically considered,  
the vegetarian and  
fruitarian diet, constitutes  
the least pain-producing  
diet, and man by partaking  
of these, contracts  
the least karmic debt.**

SPECIAL EDITION – UNITY OF MAN

The whole creation is the temple of God.  
There is no place where He is not.

In minerals life is sleeping, in plants life is dreaming,  
in birds and animals life is awakening,  
and in man life is awake.

As such we are brothers of all creatures, of plants,  
of birds and animals.

So the flowers and trees, sparrows and doves  
are as members of our own order.

How simple, pure, loving and beautiful they are!  
We should learn lessons of leading lives of purity,  
holy simplicity and divine love from them.

Kirpal Singh

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Sant Kirpal Singh distributes Chapati (Indian bread)

## The spiritual aspect of the vegetarian diet

**Everyone seeks rest and peace**, but the same remain as elusive as ever. All our efforts in this direction come to naught and prove fruitless. Why? Because we work on the wrong lines. Man lives on two planes: One is the outer; the other is the inner. First, one has to settle things outside, before one can enter within to bring peace on the outer plane. There are three factors that count a great deal in this connection: right occupation – right conduct – right diet.

The greatest purpose of human life is to know one's self and to know God, and all the rest is mere dissipation.

“Sound mind in a sound body” is a well-known aphorism. One has, therefore, to work for these before anything else. We have to keep both body and mind in a healthy condition before these can be used as instruments for spiritual advancement. For this we have, of necessity, to resort to food. We cannot do without food for keeping the body and soul together.

Our first and foremost problem then is food, for food conditions body as well as mind; right type of food – rightly earned – rightly taken – helps a lot in this direction.

One must, therefore, earn his daily bread by the sweat of his brow, as the saying goes, and should not depend on others' earnings. We must for our livelihood engage in some honest and useful pursuit, may be physical or mental, but it must be free from all guile, hypocrisy, ill-will and animosity, for karmic law is inexorable in its working. Every action leads to reaction and thus the endless series roll on interminably. Hence, the need for an honest living, howsoever poor it may be. You cannot have riches by honest avocation. Riches grow by the groans of the poor and the downtrodden – the hewers of wood and the drawers of water – and thrive on the lifeblood of our fellow beings. We ought not, therefore, run after rich foods and dainty dishes, for these bring in their train much blood-sucking and are tainted with the untold miseries of the miserable and the lowly and, in the long run, make us mis-

erable as well. “All of us are being consumed, in the invisible fires of hell, and yet know it not.”

**Food, as you know, is made for man and not man for food.** We have to make the best use of food like all the other things of life. One who is a slave of the palate cannot do anything useful. By a righteous control of the palate, we can control our entire physical and mental systems. A simple diet is more nourishing and wholesome and conducive to spiritual advancement than all the so-called delicacies which the modern culinary art provides. It will always give a comfortable feeling and serenity of mind, help you to live within your means, however limited the same may be, without extending your hand before others.

When I was about to retire after my long and meritorious government service, I was asked by my chief if I would like to have an extension, but I politely declined the offer saying, “I don’t want any extension as I know how to arrange my affairs within the limited amount of my pension.”

**Now, foods are of three kinds:**

1. **SATVIC** – Pure foods; milk, butter, cheese, rice, lentils, pulses, grains, vegetables, fruits, and nuts.
2. **RAJSIC** – Energizing foods: peppers, spices, condiments, sour and bitter things.
3. **TAMSIC** – Enervating foods: stale foods, eggs, meat, fish, fowl, wine, etc. Out of the above, one should always prefer Satvic or pure foods. These do a lot of good; again, even of these, one must partake a little below the saturation point of the appetite. In case we get delicious foods, we are tempted to eat more than what is actually needed; and the extra food taken, instead of giving extra health and energy, rather proves baneful. The food which is not digested properly and assimilated in the system causes colic pains and aches; and in some cases even cholera, and one has to pay with one’s life itself. “Do not overload the motor of your stomach”, else you fall an easy prey to nausea. A surfeit of even what is good does prove harmful at times. A moderation in



victuals and viands helps in the growth of vital powers in man. In the Puranas (ancient Hindu Scriptures) there is an allegory of the food-god complaining to Lord Vishnu, the sustainer of the universe, that people misused him a great deal. To this Lord Vishnu humorously replied: “Those who eat you too much, you must eat them up, for that is the only remedy!”

Fresh air is the most essential part in our food. One must intake long breaths, retain them a while, and exhale them out fully so as to cast out all the impurities of the body. Besides this, one must drink a lot of pure water and take fruit juices to flush the system through and through to make one clean, but avoid all types of hot and soft drinks, spirituous liquors, and intoxicants, for they render the mind and intellect morbid. Grains and fruits should form our normal and staple foods.

**Man, as said before, must earn his livelihood for himself by all fair,** legitimate, and honest means. Again, it is the moral duty of the housewife to cook the Satvic food with heart engrossed in sweet remembrance of the Lord. A food cooked like this, with the mind entrenched in the Beloved and the hands engaged in the work, becomes a Manna from heaven and proves a blessing to those who partake of it.

The great Master, Hazur Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj, often used to give us an instance of an Indian peasant with his hands on the plough but singing paeans of soul enthralling songs to his lady love. Such indeed should be our attitude in these things.

In the year 1921, I was working as an accounts officer in the Sikh unit No. 36. I got an orderly-cook in the field. I told him that I would not mind what his life was in the past, so long as he cooked my food while repeating the Holy Names of God on his lips and did not allow anyone to enter the kitchen and divert his mind in idle talk. The cook promised to do this and everything went well for two or three days, but on the fourth day, as I sat for my meditation, I felt that my mind was not steady. In the middle of the night, I called the cook and inquired of him if there was anyone else with him in the kitchen while he was preparing the food. At first he denied it,

but ultimately confessed that a person had come and had engaged him in conversation and thus diverted him from the sweet remembrance of God. He was warned against this and thereafter he always followed my behests scrupulously. This then is the best criteria to weigh one's spiritual advancement and the purity of the foodstuff that one takes, both in procurement and in preparation.

Sheik Saadi, a great mystic poet of Shiraz in Persia, always preached to divide the stomach into four compartments: Two for filling with a limited quantity of simple diet, one for pure and clear water; while reserving one for the Light of God.

We read of an incident in the life of Hazrat Mohammed, the Prophet of Islam. One day a physician came unto him and offered him his services for the sick and the ailing in the "Umat," the Prophet's following. He remained there for about six months in idle indolence, as none of the Prophet's followers fell ill. He approached the Prophet and asked for his permission to leave as no one there felt the need of his services. Hazrat Mohammed, with a gentle smile on his lips, said good-bye to the physician saying: "So long as the congregation followed the instructions, there would be no chance of any of them falling sick, for they all lived by one panacea: 'To always eat a little less than what one may, in his hunger; otherwise like to take. – To lead a chaste life with honest earnings.'"

Baba Jaimal Singh Ji, a great Master in His time, used to buy some loaves of bread or chapatis and wrap them in a piece of cloth and hang them on a branch of a tree. He would devote himself to meditation all the day long and when He would get up from His Samadhi, He would take just one loaf of bread, soak it in water, and partake of it before going into meditation again. Whole wheat bread is a complete food in itself. We deprive it of vital elements by removing the husk and grinding the kernel into white flour, thus destroying the phosphorus and oil in the grains, making a terrible mess of it.

I very often witnessed with my own eyes Hazur Baba Sawan Singh's food which was always very simple and consisted of just a few wholesome items in very small quantities.

All the Saints live on a very frugal repast. So did Shamas Tabrez, a Muslim devout, and Swami Shiv Dayal Singh Ji, both of whom lived by the principle: “Eat less and remain happy.”

**With a life of simple food and high thinking** coupled with high morals and chaste conduct, one needs no tonics which glut the market in these days. The luxurious food not only upsets the motor of the stomach, but leads to dire consequences that at times prove very dangerous. Very often persons complain that they do not seem to progress on the path, but little do they realize that it is due to faulty diet and wrong living. Prophet Mohammed, we read, lived mostly on barley-bread.

**The Satvic food keeps the head and heart free from all types of impurities.**

We every day read that crime and corruption are on the increase and various types of special police squads are formed to meet this growing menace. “Eat, drink, and be merry” is the order of the day. Everyone wishes to have a good time in travelling and in visiting places of enjoyment and in watching movies, etc., and all beyond his scanty means. But how to get more money? Nothing but Aladdin’s wonderful lamp can help you to it. An honest man can hardly keep his body and soul together, but very few can escape the temptations and snares of the glittering world. Most of us live a lustful existence: some suffering from the lust of the eyes, others of ears, and still others of various lusts of the flesh. We have no consideration for the wives, daughters, and sisters of others and follow them blindly. The world is in the grip of a fast growing retrogression.

*“A man is known by the company he keeps.”* If you want to know how your children are growing, have an eye on their companions, and from them you can easily judge your children.

**We have all been created by God.** All of us are embodied souls. Soul is of the same essence as that of God and God is in all of us; and we should, therefore, love one another. That is what St. Paul taught all His life. It is written in the Koran: “O human beings, do good; be good to your parents, relatives,

orphans, the needy and the poor, your neighbours, and your fellow beings; such a life pleases Allah. Allah is within each one of us. The haughty who is selfish is not cared for by God.”

A Master Saint always enjoins:

1. Love and reverence for all creation from the highest to the lowest
2. Observance of non-violence even in the depths of the heart
3. Truthfulness
4. Non-injury to one's feelings by thoughts, words, symbols, and deeds
5. Kindly treatment towards all
6. Cheery temperament
7. Faith in the innate goodness in man
8. Avoidance of giving bad names to others
9. Non-indulgence in slanderous and amorous talk and idle pursuits
10. Avoidance of accusations for they boomerang with greater intensity

If one is keen for God-realization then one must not hurt anyone's feelings, for heart is the seat of God.

Have you ever realized that a mango seed when embedded gathers all the sweetness from the soil, while a pepper seed attracts all the bitterness in it. As a man thinks, so he becomes. Nothing is good or bad in the world but our thinking makes it so. We, like the one or the other of the seeds, draw upon impulses from the atmosphere as suits our own mental make-up.

We have in Mahabharata, the great epic poem of ancient India, that outer signs of a chaste and clean life are good deeds. Just as a tree is known by the fruit it bears, so is a man by what he does.

This is a great teaching of a great value. It helps a man to flourish and receive a good name both here and hereafter. He will be the friend of all creatures for he resolves not to hurt or kill any of them, not even the humble bee nor the lowly ant. Such a person will surely know the Truth one day.

Prince Dhritarashtra, the son of Kuru, the mighty King of Bharat, once hurled a rebuke on Gandiva, the mighty bow of Arjuna, the Pandav Prince. Arjuna got angry and, touched to the quick, put his arrow on the Gandiva. Lord Krishna, who happened to be near at hand, asked Arjuna as to what he was doing. Arjuna replied: “I, as a Kshatriya Prince, had taken a vow that if anyone would but say a word against my mighty bow, I would not spare him.” Lord Krishna said, “O Arjuna, could you tell me the fruit of Dharma or Righteousness. Is it pain or pleasure?” Arjuna replied that Dharma or Righteousness consisted only in the resultant love and harmony.

**So one must first think of the result before doing** or even contemplating any deed. It will certainly prolong one’s span of life.

A person with a virtuous life will never entertain any evil idea against any person and will never lose his temper and get excited. Such a one gets longevity in life. The life process is calculated by means of breaths. Normally, breathing is going on very rhythmically – some 10 to 12 per minute. But when a person is in a paroxysm of rage and is excited, he takes 20 to 23 breaths in a minute. Thus there is a veritable truth hidden in the saying that good deeds or virtues prolong life; while evil deeds or vices shorten the span of one’s life.

Remember, you may even do meritorious deeds, but if you do not live a good moral life you are nowhere. Try to live by the precept of the Master and then alone your words can have weight with your friends..You cannot preach of chastity with lust in your heart and a leer in your eyes. You cannot dupe people for any length of time. Sooner or later the cat will be out of the bag. The public cannot trust you blindly for long and take you at your face value. Excuse me, if I were to question as to why societies and preachers very often get a bad name? It is because they do not live by the teachings they preach to others.

**A Godly person is possessed with a right mind and a right heart.** He has both within and without a perfect spring of peace. His dealings are fair, open, and unquestionable. Truth springs from the very bottom of his heart. The audience is spellbound and gets a feeling of comfort by hearing him, as

his utterances are drenched from the cooling effect of the loving and chaste thoughts within him and everyone feels satisfied. As one among many, he stands as a tower of strength because of the purity of his heart. Lord Tennyson, a great poet, speaking of Sir Galahad (one of the Knights of the Round Table) puts in his mouth the words: “My strength is like the strength of ten because my heart is pure.”

**It is said that out of the abundance of heart a man speaks.** On the other hand, if a person is selfish and mischievous, he cuts with his own axe the tree of his life on which he sits with complacency. Everyone will be afraid of him and live in terror of him. People dread even to see his face and consider him an ominous being. If such a person goes anywhere, people shun him outright, even from a distance, and consider him an unlucky anathema.

A righteous person, on the other hand, has his eyes on his weaknesses and through self-introspection, weeds them out one by one. Swami Shiv Dayal Singh Ji advises that one should pick up his failures one by one and cast them out. All other Saints have said this thing in the same strain.

1. Love thy neighbour as thyself.
2. Do unto others as you would wish them to do unto you.

The whole of the religious philosophy hangs by these two cardinal principles. If one puts before him these two golden rules, his life will surely be transformed. The person who has neither an element of sympathy in his heart nor a human touch is not fit to be called even a man, and he cannot know God. He who treats his enemies lovingly will disarm them in no time.

Insofar as you can, try to do no injury to anyone. Be good to all and you will be at peace with yourself and be a radiating centre of loving grace around you. The prayers of others to whom you may have done good, will help you. The good thoughts of others will swarm around you with a benediction. The very idea of doing good will first affect you and will draw all good vibrations from the surrounding atmosphere.

In a nutshell, we have just laid a “Panch Shila” or five fundamental truths on which we can build the wonderful mansion of spirituality. These are:

1. Non-violence in thought, word, and deed
2. Truthfulness
3. Chastity
4. Love for all and hatred for none, irrespective of position, wealth, or learning
5. Selfless service – physical and financial and a willing share in the joys and sorrows of others

“The living Master cuts asunder the Gordian knot of an initiate.”

“The disciple of the Master refrains from sins.”

Those who will follow the above will enrich their lives here and hereafter. They will control their mind and outgoing faculties by coming in contact with the living Word of God through the living Master-Saint.

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(Circular Letter “*The spiritual aspect of the vegetarian diet*”  
by Sant Kirpal Singh, issued in July 1958)

With a life of simple food and high thinking coupled with high morals and chaste conduct, one needs no tonics which glut the market in these days.

The luxurious food not only upsets the motor of the stomach, but leads to dire consequences that at times prove very dangerous.

Very often persons complain that they do not seem to progress on the Path, but little do they realize that it is due to faulty diet and wrong living.

Kirpal Singh



## Ahar or diet

**Diet naturally plays a major role in the problem of life.** We need food for the upkeep of our physical being. We are compelled by nature to exist in this world as long as our allotted span of life is determined by destiny, or karmas do not run out. For our very existence we have to subsist on one thing or another. Man is quite helpless in this respect. The law of karma is nature's unseen method of keeping the world in its iron grip, so as to keep it peopled and going. It, therefore, becomes all the more necessary that man should guard against contracting eating habits thoughtlessly, heedlessly, and indiscriminately. As we cannot do without food, we must select at least such articles of diet as may prove the least harmful in our spiritual pursuit. Our diet should not contract for us unnecessary karmic debts which it may be possible to avoid by a little care. With this end in view, let us study nature.

Man's diet comes mainly from earth; i.e. land, air, and water. We also see that life exists in all that is moving and static. The moving creatures live upon each other, as well as on static creation – to wit, vegetables, plants, shrubs, herbs, trees, and the like. Man, however, makes friends with and loves creatures (birds and animals), who live upon other life – and makes them his pets. The ancients knew well that man, bird, and animal were all bound up with the same karmic bond. Man with the thought of common brotherhood worked hard both for himself and for his pets. He tilled the land, grew fruits, and produced food both for himself, his bird friends, and his kine and oxen. But in course of time, he grew ease-loving, with the result that he first preyed upon the animals' milk and then upon their flesh as well.

**According to the moral, social, and spiritual codes of conduct,** one must not interfere with the lives of any animal in God's creation. In India, this standard of living is enunciated as Ahimsa or non-injury to all living creatures. This led to the vegetarian diet as contra-distinguished from the non-vegetarian diet. As we think deeply over the natural and unnatural phases of diet, we come to a better understanding of the problem of Gunas or the

innate propensities, natural inclinations, and latent tendencies that are in-born in all sentient beings.

**Diet must be classified into grains, cereals, vegetables, and fruits** which are classed as *Satvic* or *Satoguni diet*. This diet is pure and produces serenity and equipoise, befitting sages and seers. The saints and hermits who retired to secluded caves and huts for meditation, always preferred kand (potatoes), sweet potatoes, zamikund or artichoke, etc., which grow and develop under the ground. They also took mool (the edible roots of mool also grow underground like radish, turnip, and beet root) and phal. The phal (fruits) provided them with sufficient vitamins and organic salts in their original form to keep them fit for a life of concentration and meditation. Some of the foods naturally grow in abundance while others are produced with some effort. The grains and cereals were meant for the general public.

**Satvic, or pure diet** of mool, kand, phal, and cow's milk, etc., prolongs life and cures a number of diseases and ailments. Its utility has come to be realized even by the medical science. Now-a-days, many medicines are prepared from herbs, fruits, and grains, and these have been found to be very efficacious. Again, all natural curative methods of sunbathing, seabathing, mud-bathing, waterbathing, massage, physiotherapy, naturetherapy, and chromotherapy are producing wonderful results. *The Satvic foods* and simple living are conducive to the development of the highest culture or civilization. We must remember that food is made for man and not man for food. Eat to live and not live to eat, should be our maxim in life. By following this course, we create receptivity for higher things in life, ethical and spiritual, leading gradually to self-knowledge and God-knowledge.

**Rajasic or energy producing diet** includes besides vegetarian foods, products like milk, cream, butter and ghee, etc., from animals other than cows, if taken in moderation. In ancient India, the use of milk was restricted mainly to the princely order, as the princes needed extra energy for keeping under their control rough, turbulent and barbarious people not living up to any set principles of life. The milking of dairy cattle was permissible only after the cows were bred and treated with extra care, and sufficient milk was

left in their udders for feeding their own off-spring, the calf. The residue of milk was allowed to man under special circumstances. This special rule was intended to prevent degeneration of the early civilization. Rishis, in ancient times, also made a limited use of milk, leaving a sufficient amount for the use and growth of the animal progeny. The Rishis lived alone in comparative isolation, devoting most of their time to meditation.

The traditional custom of using only the residue of milk is still prevalent in some of the villages in India. But today, man in his lust for unbridled power, is violating all the laws of nature under the pretext of the so-called freedom that he claims for himself. Man has unfortunately come to believe in the principle of the “survival of the fittest” and has, therefore, to pay dearly for his unwise choice in the matter.

The only consideration of man today is to obtain as much milk as possible, even at the cost of the calves themselves. In some places, he throws them in boiling water immediately after they are born, and applies milking machines to the cow’s udders to draw out the last drop of milk in order to keep pace with trade competition and profit-making. This is what some proudly call high technical skill and civilization. Our budding reformers of today thrust such trades and practices on man instead of improving agriculture and rearing and developing livestock, both of which are harmless pursuits, and could relieve the pressure of want so much talked about these days.

**Tamsic, or stupefying diet,** consists of meat, liquors, garlic\*, etc.; or, in fact, any other diet, natural or unnatural, stale or fresh. Those who resort to free and uncontrolled eating, live to eat and not eat to live. Their aim in life is hedonistic and their slogan is “*eat, drink, and be merry*”. They indulge headlong in what they call the sweet pleasures of life. When blessed with small powers of concentration, they direct all their energies (mental and physical) towards glory of the little self in them, the egoistic mind. Man is pleased to term this course of action as the higher reaction of civilization.

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\*) within the vegetarian diet garlic can be used without hesitation

The Masters of the highest order strictly prohibit this sort of living to those seeking the knowledge of the spirit in man and the final liberation of the soul from the shackles of mind and matter.

**Will thinking persons just stop a while to cogitate on** and realize the true position of man? Why is he so proud to call himself, or to be called, the noblest of creatures, the roof and crown of the creation? Whither is man moving headlong? Is he not standing on the brink of a terrific precipice, with an extremely sharp declivity, ready to topple down at any moment? He has, by his conduct, exposed himself recklessly to chance winds of Nature's vengeance.

Hourly he stands in danger of being swept to the deepest depths of physical and moral annihilation.

Man has taken his lessons in diet from the beasts of the jungle and acts like a wild creature. He delights in taking the flesh not only of the harmless creatures like kine and goats, deer and sheep, the innocent fowls of the air and fish of the water; but actually partakes of the human flesh and the human blood to satisfy his insatiate hunger for gold and riches. He has not yet finished his course of self aggrandizement which he proudly calls progress. He might well ponder over the basic principles on which the Masters advise and prescribe vegetable diet. Vegetables, too, contain life in a latent form, as has now been proved by scientists all the world over. Still, as we have to play our part in this panorama of life on the stage of the world and have therefore to maintain ourselves to keep body and soul together, we have to depend upon the produce of the soil.

**Yes, of course, there is life in vegetables, fruits, and grains.** The essential element of life is growth and decay. The truth of this can be traced from the earliest times. It is not a new verdict, though some of the scientific minds have rediscovered this truth and lay claim to it as their own.

Now let us come to the point. In the entire creation, the law of nature holds that life depends upon life. Like creatures in other grades of creation, man also maintains himself by eating something containing life. Outwardly

it appears that with regard to contracting karmas, man is in the same boat with other creatures in the lower strata of life – animals, reptiles, and the like.

**Nature has one other propelling wheel working** in this material world; the law of evolution. It provides that all living beings pass from one position to another. As they travel from one order of creation to the next higher, each being has a separate value from the lower one. The basis of determining the face value, as well as the intrinsic value, is matter and intellect. The more valuable the constituents of matter present in a being in prominent form, the more the intellect and more the value of the being. Saints apply this law in the solution of the problem of diet for man. Whether he heeds it or not, Saints place this law before man, so that he may reform his diet, and avoid, as much as possible, a heavy load of karmic chains in which he is inextricably held fast.

**Each kind of diet has its own inherent effect on man**, detrimental to the acquisition of the highest aim: self-knowledge and God-knowledge. This law coincides with what man generally accepts, although he is unaware of the reasons for his actions. Comparing the following data in everyday life will confirm, to man's surprise, that what he takes as acceptable in social living remains in total agreement with the law of nature here explained.

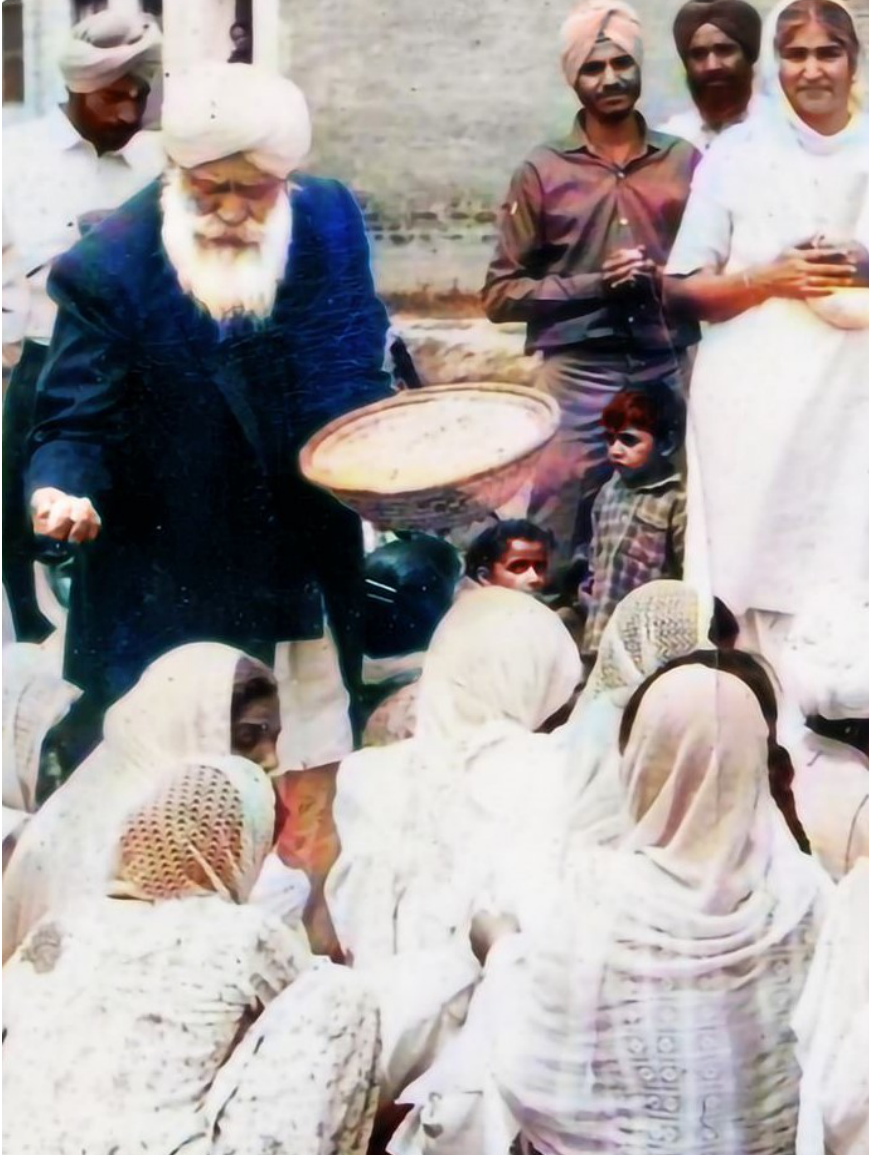
The man's body, with all the *five Tattwas* (or creative and component elements – earth, water, fire, air, and ether) in full activity, is valued the most. This is why he tops the list of beings in the creation and is considered next to God – his Creator. Man's killing of fellow-creatures is considered to be the most heinous of crimes, which merits capital punishment or the death penalty. Next value is placed on quadrupeds and beasts having *four Tattwas* in active operation in them, the fifth, ether, being almost absent or forming a negligible portion. The want on killing of another's animal, therefore, entails a penalty equivalent to the price of the animal in question. Then comes the place of birds, with *three active elements* in them – viz. water, fire, and air, and hence are considered of a nominal value. Lesser still is the value placed on creatures who have *two elements active* – viz. earth and fire – and the oth-

er three existing in a dormant or latent form, as in reptiles, worms, and insects, which (in general) are killed and trampled without the least compunction as no penalty attaches in their case. Least value is placed on roots, vegetables, and fruits in which the element of water alone is active and predominates, while the remaining four elements are altogether in a dormant state.

**Thus, karmically considered,** the vegetarian and fruitarian diet, constitutes the least pain-producing diet, and man by partaking of these, contracts the least karmic debt. He is, therefore, to be content with this type of food, as long as he cannot dispense with it and take to something which may involve no consequence at all.

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(Extract from the book "*The Wheel of Life: The law of action and reaction*"  
by Sant Kirpal Singh, Appendix I, chapter 2, "Ahar or Diet")



Sant Kirpal Singh at Manav Kendra

## Questions and answers

*Question: The people who are interested in Your teaching are very often asking why we should not eat eggs, because the eggs these days have no living germs in them and cannot be developed into chickens.*

*Sant Kirpal Singh:* First of all, where is the surety that every egg does not have that element in it? Are they sure? There are so many eggs mixed together. When they sell eggs in the shops, you see, there is no differentiation. You cannot earmark definitely what is infertile or fertile – first thing. The other reason eggs are not to be used is because they flare up passions. Any food which flares up passions is not to be used. They say it is very cold in ... I have been there for three months and never used any eggs. I never felt the necessity for it. If your stomach is all right – eat less than you actually want – no disease will overtake you. So that is the reason for that.

*Question: Oftentimes you are invited by non-initiates and they offer you certain foods which we are expected to take; if you do not take the food they will be offended.*

*Sant Kirpal Singh:* If anybody offers you poison, are you going to accept? Politely refuse; especially poison. One man came to me. “There is something in the Bible which says, whatever is offered should be accepted.” He quoted something like that and said, “If anybody will offer me any food, I will accept.” And because of that condition he was not initiated. I did not give him initiation. If anybody gives you meat and you eat it, then? You are to see to what you are taking. A friend would not like to give you poison if he comes to know that it does not suit you. If a friend offers you something, and he knows fully well that it does not suit you – will he press you to take it? No. Common sense. These are only lame excuses, I would say. Those who reason in this way want some excuse to have that food, that’s all.

So far it has never happened that I was invited anywhere and they pressed me to eat meat. Sometimes even the other people did not have any. If they ate it themselves, they never invited me. But even if they should invite me, if



flesh food was there, I would not take it, that's all. Only take what is necessary. In America we were invited by ... to a banquet so sumptuous that even the kings could not offer so many kinds of fish, so many kinds of meat. Plates were passed out to us. I took one cup of tea! Others who were with me did not partake. They were also passing on the dishes. More than fifty, seventy, eighty kinds of plates were passed on. And ... was wise enough, as he also did not take things.

*Question: Sometimes you are invited, not by friends, but by colleagues, or by your chief, and if you don't accept the invitation, you will hurt them.*

*Sant Kirpal Singh:* If they invite me, I will go. I will take only what is required of me. They cannot force the food in your mouth.

*Question: We also go sometimes to cocktail parties; it's very important. We take only ginger ale, or some nuts or something.*

*Sant Kirpal Singh:* Yes, take what suits you. Generally if they know, they don't prepare dishes you cannot eat. If they're ignorant, then that's another reason. Even then you need not show your distaste; take only what you want. These are very little daily dyings, you see. We must use our common sense. As I told you, if somebody gives you poison, would you accept it, even from a friend? So politely send it off, politely refuse. "Well, it does not suit; thank you so much anyhow." When once they come in contact with you and know, they don't force. If out of ignorance they prepare something, well, don't hurt them. Send it off in a polite way.

*Question: I like eating very much ... (Everyone chuckles but Master stops them saying, "No, no. It is a question for all. Not one – everyone – most of us are doing it.") ... but I don't want to think so often of eating. However, since I manage a vegetarian kitchen, my profession draws my mind there. Would another job help resolve this?*

*Sant Kirpal Singh:* I think I have told you so many times. Do one thing at a time, wholly and solely. When you are in the kitchen, be there doing your job. Take only food that agrees with you and only as much as you need. Let one half of your stomach be filled with food, one fourth be filled with wa-

ter, and one fourth left vacant. The best criterion is to leave the table when you're still hungry. Eat a morsel less than you need. Have control over that part. No need of changing your profession. It will be all right if you behave like that.

*Question: Master, if you suddenly have to start cooking meat in your job, or sometimes they ask you to do things which you're not accustomed to do...*

*Sant Kirpal Singh:* Look here, if it is part of your duty, do it, but don't take it yourself. Baba Jaimal Singh, the Master of our Master, was a military man. He was given the duty of distributing the meat to the soldiers. All right, he kept his own food. If your duty binds you to cook, you are not to partake, you see. In due course, avoid such duty. Somebody wrote to me, "Well, it is my duty to taste." [Master chuckles.] They're paid for that, you see. Sometimes hundreds of thousands of rupees are paid for that, only for tasting food. Then what to do? Well, if you taste it, certainly you ingest it, and have the effect of it. Yes?

*Question: Someone here in India, a Sikh gentleman, asked me if I would mind sitting at the same table with others who were taking meat, and I said, but not on my plate.*

*Sant Kirpal Singh:* What do you do in the planes? In the airplanes you can have vegetarian food if you tell them you want it. One time there were no arrangements provided for vegetarians and every few hours they kept running up with biscuits, with fruit, with this and that. "We are sorry, we did not know." These are lame excuses given, that's all. When they come to know, they never press you. This is our weak point, you see. At heart of hearts we want it and want some excuse. "How could I hurt his feelings? He may not be able to take it..." Be a man of principle!

Well, being a man of principle, we also need to know how to speak. Last night I was telling you about this. There are ways and ways to refuse a thing without hurting anybody. Kabir said, if a man knows how to speak, it is of such great value which cannot be comprehended. This is a man who simply knows how to speak. Remember I told you there are two different ways of

addressing a blind man: “Oh, blind man,” and “Well, when did you lose your sight, please?” The same thing – but with vast difference in effect. One is crowing over, “Oh, blind man!” And the other, “Well, dear friend, when did you lose your eyesight?” Is it not the same thing? The difference lies in the mode of expression. One phrase makes our friends enemies. The other phrase makes enemies our friends.

These are common sense things not laid down in books. How many things can you write in books? So in the physical presence of the Master, you learn many things which are not given in books, in detail, because He has passed through life like you as a man; He has not been a recluse. He knows all these difficulties, He has met with them, and He can tell you how to meet with them. How can a man who has no experience of the world advise you? We need somebody to guide us who has been like us, passed through the world, and knows the ins and outs of the world. Yes? Come on up. I learn many things from you people, too.

*Question: So then if according to the laws of nature, we eat something like cookies that might contain eggs, it will have its influence, whether one knows it or not?*

*Sant Kirpal Singh:* If you are in meditation regularly, even one – you will be affected by the littlest thing. When I was an accounts officer with some regiment in the firing line, it was given an orderly to help me, to cook for me and look after me. I told him, “Look here, I cannot be responsible for your life but one thing you must guard strictly. Let nobody enter the kitchen when you cook the food. And you will only go on with the repetition of the Name of God or read some scriptures – nothing more.” He obeyed. For two or three days it was all right. My system was at midnight, while people were sleeping, I was awake, meditating. One night, I found something in my mind – some ramification. I called him about one in the morning. “Look here, who was in the kitchen?” – “Nobody.” – “Why do you tell a lie?” Then he agreed. “Yes, there was a man; we were talking.”

So if there is much filth within you, a little more filth won't affect you. But if you've got no filth, even a little grain, half, one-fourth of a grain will affect

you. Just see it. So money should be earned by hard dint of labour – honest earning. And the food earned that way should pass through the hands of those who are pious and righteous. Every thought of the man bringing food, will have effect. The quality of the food should also be pacifying. Then the one who cooks it, his effect is also there. In the old days in India, they did not allow anybody to enter the kitchen before taking a bath, and when they were cooking they were only doing remembrance of God. The result was that whoever ate the food was changed. So we don't care. If we would care for the farthings, pounds would be saved, would it not?

We don't care for what we consider trifling things, but they do affect us. Even your honest earnings are affected by the many stages through which it has to pass. And all things arise where? Well, I'm talking from a common sense point of view, you see. If man has a good thought and food passes through him, that food will carry good effect. When you eat that, it will add to your good. If it passes through some lusty man, those same thoughts will come up. Also evil thoughts – thinking evil of others – will have its effect. You now know how we should be cautious about our kitchens.

*Question: Master, then when we travel and eat in other kitchens, restaurants, and things, if we do our Simran, is that enough?*

*Sant Kirpal Singh:* Well look here, haven't you strong will force? Infuse your thoughts into it. Once we were in the hills with our Master. There was nothing else to eat except meat and bread in that town. We asked Master, "Well, what shall we do? There is no shop that can sell us vegetarian food." "Never mind," He said, "Buy the loaves of bread from one place and buy milk or curd from somewhere else." It is we who have to guard it. Food that goes in defiles you, and what goes out of you also affects you.

So if you will understand the principle of thought, right thoughts will come from right understanding. Right understanding is very clear. We're all equals as men, as souls. We are brothers and sisters in God. The same power is controlling us, called by any name. Man-body is the temple. Have



it – become a conscious co-worker of that Power. For those who have become the conscious co-workers, there's no high or low; there are no Hindus, Mohammedans, or Christians, you see. We're all companions, that's all. Long yarns or lectures won't help you, I tell you. You have to come to right understanding. No lecture will help you unless you lecture to your own self. We know so many things – so that is why it is said, “Wanted: Reformers, not of others, but of themselves.” If you reform your life, then...

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(Excerpt from the book *“The Light of Kirpal”*, chapter 49 and 69, and from the book *“Spitual Elixir”* by Kirpal Singh)

Regarding laxity in the prescribed diet, I wish to say to all aspirants on the Path that it is necessary, so long as one is in the physical body, that vegetarianism should be strictly adhered to.

Any relaxation in the matter of diet would not only be a definite hindrance in meditation but would unnecessarily contract karmic reaction.

The real goal is to use every means possible to rise into full God-consciousness.

Kirpal Singh

## Simple diet, simple living, and high thinking

**A natural diet consists** of fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts, grains and permitted dairy products. Animal foods such as meat, fish, fowl, eggs or their by products, and spices and intoxicants should be strictly avoided. A strict vegetarian diet is what is wanted. The stomach should also remain partly empty. Let half of the stomach be full with food, one fourth with water and let one fourth remain vacant, so that digestion will not be difficult. The more your stomach is clear, the more concentration you will have. If your stomach is upset, then naturally you cannot sit, you cannot concentrate. So to help you in your meditations, the stomach should be set. No overfeeding should be indulged in. Eat when you really feel hungry, not every time putting in something. Two meals a day are enough, though you may have a little breakfast in the morning. Sometimes the Masters say that those who would like to progress more should have only one meal a day.

**Let the stomach remain partly empty.** If you put more food in it than can be digested, naturally the things which are not digested will create disease. Eat as much as you can digest. Give some rest to your poor stomach. It takes at least four to five hours to digest anything. If you eat too much too often, your stomach will revolt. Eat a simple vegetarian diet, and only as much as you really need. The servant who is engaged to work 24 hours will revolt. He must have some rest during the day and night. So the stomach should also have rest, and that will only commence four or five hours after you have taken your food. If you take food at 8 am, then 12 noon, then 4 pm, then 8 pm, your stomach will have no time to rest. So simple diet, simple living and high thinking is what is required. The more you eat, the more you cannot digest, the more disease will affect you. So let your stomach have some rest. Men do not die only of hunger, but also from overfeeding. This creates diseases.

**So eat as much as you require when you are really hungry.** Don't for formality say, "Now we should have something to eat." This is the usual course with most of us, children and adult..

**The more we live a regulated life, the better our health will be.** All phases of life are touched upon by the Master to help people. If you have a simple diet and eat only that much which can be digested, you will be healthy. If you eat more than can be digested the result is you cannot sit, you cannot think clearly, you cannot devote time, you feel lazy. So simple living, simple diet and high thinking is what is wanted. You should eat only what is really a necessity. Do not overfeed. Overfeeding will make you lazy and slothful. You will always be procrastinating. You will say, "No I will do it later, let me rest." This is because the stomach is not well.

Once it so happened that Prophet Mohammed had forty followers. One doctor attached himself to them, so that if anyone fell sick, he would give him some medicine. For six months the doctor remained with them but nobody fell ill. Then he came to the prophet and said, "Well, nobody has fallen sick, so there is no use in my being here." Prophet Mohammed told him, "Well look here, so long as they follow my behests, they will not be ill. I tell them to take one morsel of food less than they really feel like, not to have a full diet, to eat a little less, so that when they leave the table, they are still a little hungry. I tell them to eat twice a day and during the day they should work hard. They should also do their meditations. If they follow these behests, nobody will fall sick."

**These are very small things but they have much effect.** So a simple diet, a strict vegetarian diet with no spices, should be adhered to. Eat only as much as you need and leave the table still a little hungry. These are the things to be followed which will make you active in all your affairs, whether in meditation, physical work or anything else.

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(From the book "*Morning Talks*", chapter 4 by Kirpal Singh)



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We have to make the best  
use of food like all the  
other things of life.

A simple diet is more nourishing  
and wholesome and conducive  
to spiritual advancement  
than all the so-called delicacies  
which the modern culinary art  
provides.

It will always give a comfortable  
feeling and serenity of mind,  
help you to live within your means,  
however limited the same may be,  
without extending your hand  
before others.

Sant Kirpal Singh