

**The Spiritual and Karmic Aspects
of the
Vegetarian Diet**

Kirpal Singh

Sawan Singh

From letters of Kirpal Singh
and Sawan Singh
and excerpts from books
by Kirpal Singh

I have written books without any copyright—no rights reserved—because it is a Gift of God, given by God, as much as sunlight; other gifts of God are also free.

—from a talk by Kirpal Singh, with the author of a book after a talk to students of religion at Santa Clara University, San Jose, California on November 16, 1972.

The text of this book is the same as what was published during the lifetime of Master Kirpal Singh. Aside from punctuation and capitalization corrections, no changes have been made to the text; it is exactly the same as what was approved by Master Kirpal Singh.

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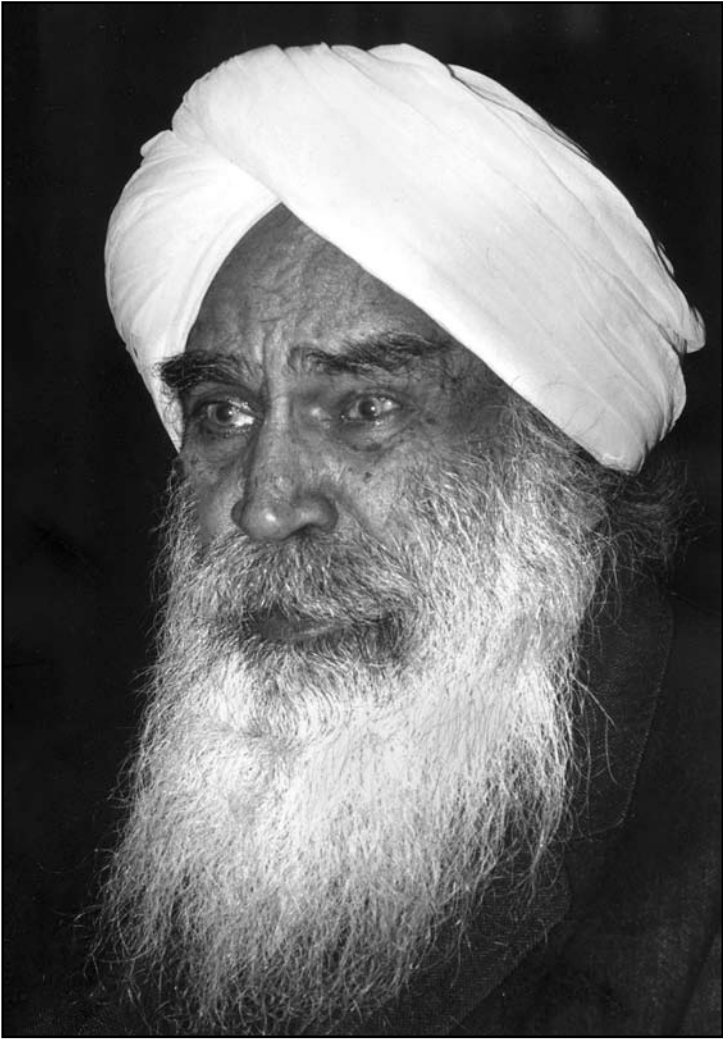
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Sant Kirpal Singh Ji
(1894-1974)

Sant Kirpal Singh passed on from this earth in 1974. Therefore, He is no longer taking on new people to guide out of this world and back to God. He left many books that explain, as much as can be conferred in a worldly language, the meaning of life. The books and the Ruhani Satsang website <http://www.RuhaniSatsangUSA.org/> are maintained to help stir an interest in God and to help people know what to look for in their search for the way back home.

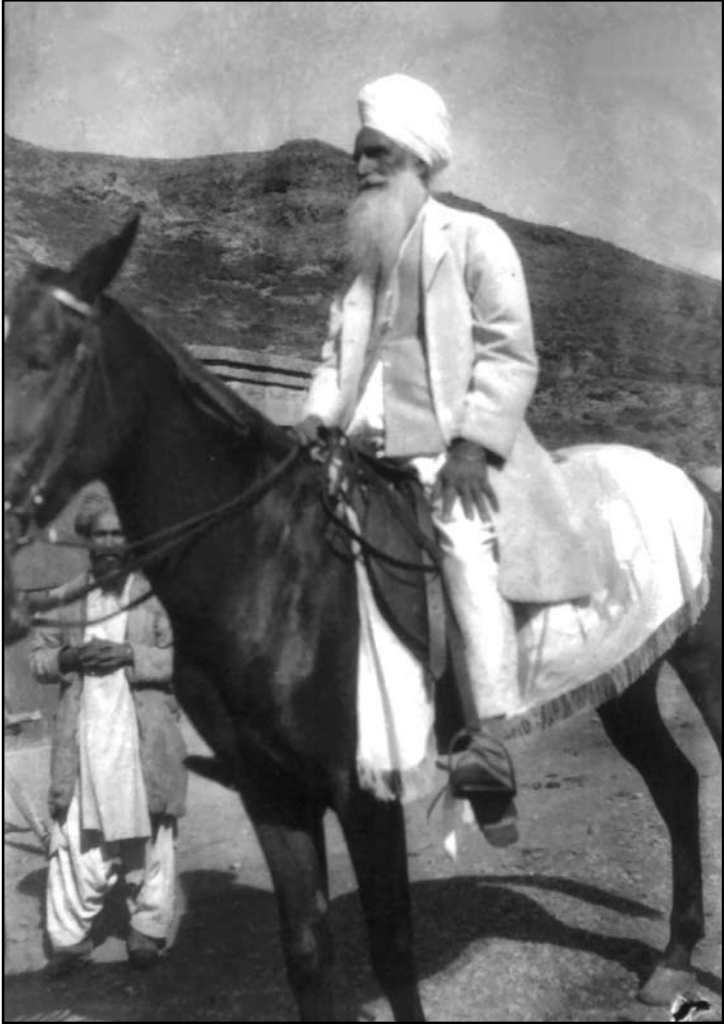
When asked about a successor, we can only offer this quotation from the Master:

Today there is a great awakening beginning. Some have got the answer, some have not, but the search to solve the mystery of life has been born all over the world. The day that question arises in the mind is the greatest day of one's life, for once it is born, it does not succumb until it is satisfied.

So, make your life an example of the teachings you follow — live up to them.

If you have a strong desire to get it, then God Himself will make the arrangements for you.

[Excerpts from a talk published in the January 1971 issue of *Sat Sandesh*]



Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj
(1858-1948)

Truth is higher than everything but higher still is true living. Truth and true living are not exclusive of each other but go together; one supplements the other and their combination forms the God-like life. One who practices true living will always earn his living by the sweat of his brow and feed himself and his family on rightly procured foods consisting of fruits, vegetables, nuts, cereals and permitted dairy products. Furthermore, he will be honest and aboveboard in his dealings with others.

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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

THE SPIRITUAL ASPECT OF THE VEGETARIAN DIET

Circular Number 10 First Published July, 1958
by Kirpal Singh

Everyone seeks rest and peace, but they 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, the outer and the inner. First, we have to settle things outside before we 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 that one should know one's self and 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 rolls 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 lowly and, in the long run, make us miserable 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 and 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 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, and wine, etc.

Out of the above, we should always prefer **SATVIC** or pure foods. These do a lot of good. Again, even of these, we must partake a little below the saturation point of the appetite. When 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, 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 then 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-enthraling songs to his lady love. Such indeed should be our attitude in these things.

In the year 1921, I was working as 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 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 goodbye 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 by grinding the kernel into white flour by power-driven mills, and thus destroy the phosphorus and oil in the grains and make 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 **SATVIK** 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 traveling 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 neighbors, 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 from giving bad names to others.
9. Non-indulgence in slanderous and amorous talk and idle pursuits.
10. Avoid 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 thinketh, 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 Dhrit Rashtra, 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 what he was doing.

Arjuna replied that he, 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. A 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 neighbor 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 no element of sympathy in his heart and 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 center 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.

THE KARMIC LAW OF THE VEGETABLE DIET

Dictated by Baba Sawan Singh

A human being cannot comprehend the existence of God and His creation until he has succeeded in getting his soul free from the bondage of the five Tattwas, the twenty-five Prakritis, the three Gunas, Maya and Mind — all of which are enveloping it here — until he has emancipated his soul from every one of these errors and taken it beyond the sphere of mind and intellect, and opened his internal vision. Only then is the soul able to know itself and understand what it is made of.

After that, it becomes fit to seek its Creator and to find out the ocean from which it originally descended, as well as the means to regain it. Consequently, before a disciple has succeeded in getting rid of these chains, it shall be sufficient for him to know that this world can be divided into two parts, land and water.

The creatures of water live upon each other. Nature has not provided them with any other means of subsistence. Big fish are eating the little ones, etc. The same holds true of the land. Lions and tigers eat up wolves and jackals. The latter subsist on the meat of sheep, goats, etc. They, in turn, eat plants. Hawks eat smaller birds. Birds eat insects, and men eat

most every form of life, so far as climate and special circumstances of their own countries permit.

Every grain, every plant, has life in it. Hindu philosophy has acknowledged this fact since very ancient times. Dr. Bose has demonstrated this fact to the European world by his experiments, showing that plants feel and breathe, and have souls. If a ray of light is allowed to penetrate a dark room, the microscope reveals numberless germs floating in the air of that room. The whole room seems to be full of this germ life. When we breathe, these tiny creatures go inside of us and die. When we walk, numberless creatures are killed by contact with us, and countless others are crushed beneath our feet. The same is true when we drink water. The microscope reveals myriads of tiny creatures in a tumbler of water; and these we drink to their death every day. Souls would appear to be literally packed together in all space in our world. If we put down a needle point on the earth, countless germs may be found beneath its point.

And so, in our world, life is everywhere destroying life. In such a world where one creature is eating up another, it is impossible to expect either justice or peace of mind. (There is no rest or security anymore.) Therefore, when the ancient sages found that in this world creatures were destroying each other, they decided it was better to give up the world. They found that in such a world there could be no peace of mind, and it was impossible to attain bliss until and unless the soul breaks away from

the bonds which have kept it enchained; and that it was folly to regard the pleasures of this world as a means to happiness, because they lead to hell and further bind the soul with Karma and dirt.

They determined that it was impossible to find peace of mind in any worldly object, and that happiness lies within man himself and that ocean of which he is a drop. Therefore, the Sages thought, as long as they were confined in the prison of this world, they would adopt the course which was the least harmful; they would subsist on creatures the killing of which was the least sinful. They discovered that all living beings of this world could be divided into classes as regards the composition of their bodies and the number of elements they contain. By elements they did not mean the ninety or so elements discovered by modern scientists, but the main conditions or divisions of matter.

There are five such classes of substances. According to their classification, under class one, came all of those creatures in whom all five of these substances are active, that is, man. In the next class came those in which only four substances are active and one dormant, and that is quadrupeds. In them there is no sense of discrimination, because in them the Akash Tattwa is dormant. In the third class fell creatures in which only three substances are active, namely air, water, and fire. They are birds. They lack earth and Akash. The fourth class is made up of insects, in which only two substances are active, air and fire. Then comes the last class, the fifth, in

which only one element or substance is active, that is, the vegetable world. In them, water is the only active element. Experts have proved that, in many vegetables, there is as much as ninety-five percent water. When the creatures of the other four classes are killed or injured, they cry out in pain, but not so the vegetables, though they have life. So the Sages concluded that the eating of vegetables was the least sinful, (the least burdened with karma). Although the eating of vegetables produced some karma, yet it was of a light nature, which could be easily worked off by spiritual exercises. They thus chose the course of least resistance, and so abstained from the killing of other forms of life.

The method of practice of the Sound Current is the only method by which to escape this jail into which we are born. This method is natural, and it was not designed by man. It is as old as the beginning of creation. The Creator is ONE, and therefore the Way to reach Him is ONE, and it is in the interior of every human being. It is incapable of alteration, modification, addition, or improvement. Man is to reach the ocean of his Origin by means of ascending the Sound Current, irrespective of any caste, creed, nationality, or sex. It is a practice for the awakening of powers within us. By slow degrees, our souls will emerge from the grave of the body or vacate it. In the body there are nine openings through which the soul communicates with this world, and these the soul learns to close and to fix its attention at the back of the eyes. Then it begins to traverse higher planes. When

it attains Turya Pad (astral), it will acquire control over the mind, senses, lust, anger, avarice, attachment, and egotism. At present the soul is under the control of mind, which itself is under the control of the senses. When we gain the astral, after leaving the material, the soul gains control over the mind. When we get beyond the astral and the heavens and hells which are within the astral, all of these are left behind. The soul will then hold these in contempt, and then it will go to Brahm Lok, or the Causal plane, which contains Mukti, or Salvation planes.

Brahm is also the servant of Par-Brahm. Therefore, leaving Brahm, the soul should go to the Par-Brahm, where it will be freed from all its shackles. On reaching Par-Brahm, all the material, astral, and causative coverings of mind and matter that envelope the soul are removed. Then the soul is pure spirit. This is self-realization. Here there is no form, no cover, no shape, no youth nor old age — only the soul, shining in its pure radiance — a drop of existence, knowledge, and bliss, capable of comprehending the Great Ocean, its Creator. Now the drop tries to reach and mingle with the Ocean.

So, it is here, in Par-Brahm, that one begins to realize the full significance of Sant Mat. Hence, the only medicine for all of our ailments is the practice of the Holy Sound together with the Master's spiritual help and guidance. The Master is not a body only. He is the Power which guides and helps us at every stage and in every region during our inward spirit-

ual journey. When we are in the physical body, He instructs us in His physical form. When we go inward to the Astral Planes, He is in the Astral Form, and, as we proceed further, He assumes the form of each region all the way up to Sach Khand (our true home).

AHAR OR DIET

From the book *The Wheel of Life* by Kirpal Singh

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) as live upon the life in nature

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 contradistinguished 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 inborn 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* and *phal* (the edible roots of *mool* also grow underground like radish, turnip, and beet). 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 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 sun-bathing, sea-bathing, mud-bathing, water-bathing, massage, physiotherapy, nature-therapy, and chromo-therapy 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.

Rajsic 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 barbarous 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. The limited use of milk was also made by *rishis* in ancient times, who lived in comparative isolation all by themselves, and devoted most of their time to meditation in seclusion and they left a lot of milk for the use and growth of the animal progeny.

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. 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 on 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 reason 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 *tatwas* (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 *tatwas* in active operation in them — the fifth, ether, being almost absent or forming a negligible portion. The wanton 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 other three existing in a dormant or latent form, as in reptiles, worms, and insects, which 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, in fact, 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.

Now let us see what the *Essene Gospel of St. John* says in this context:

But they [the disciples] answered him:

“Whither should we go, Master, for with you are the words of eternal life? Tell us, what are the sins we must shun, that we may never more see disease?”

Jesus answered: “Be it so according to your faith,” and he sat down among them, saying:
XXI

“It was said to them of old time, ‘Honor thy Heavenly Father and thy earthly mother, and do their commandments, that thy days may be long upon the earth.’ And next afterwards was given this commandment: ‘Thou shalt not kill,’ for life is given to all by God, and that which God has given, let not man take away. For I tell you truly, from one Mother proceeds all that lives upon the earth. Therefore, he who kills, kills his brother. And from him will the Earthly Mother turn away, and will pluck from him her quickening breasts. And he will be shunned by her angels, and Satan will have his dwelling in his body. And the flesh of slain beasts in his body will become his own tomb. For I tell you truly, he who kills, kills himself, and who so

eats the flesh of slain beasts, eats of the body of death And their death will become his death For the wages of sin is death. Kill not, neither eat the flesh of your innocent prey, lest you become the slaves of Satan. For that is the path of suffering, and it leads unto death. But do the Will of God that His angels may serve you on the way of life. Obey, therefore, the words of God: ‘Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat; and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is breath of life, I give every green herb for meat.’ Also the milk of everything that moveth and that liveth upon each shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given unto them, so I give their milk unto you. But flesh, and the blood which quickens it, shall ye not eat. . . .”

XXII

Then another [disciple] said, “Moses, the greatest in Israel, suffered our forefathers to eat the flesh of clean beasts, and forbade the flesh of unclean beasts. Why, therefore, do you forbid us the flesh of all beasts? Which law comes from God? That of Moses or your law?”

XXIII

. . . And Jesus continued, “God commanded your forefathers: ‘Thou shalt not kill.’ But their heart was hardened and they killed. Then Moses desired that at least they should not kill men, and he suffered them to kill beasts. And then the heart of your forefathers was hardened yet more, and they killed men and beasts likewise. But I say to you: Kill neither men, nor beasts, nor yet the food which goes into your mouth. For if you eat living food, the same will quicken you, but if you kill your food, the dead food will kill you also. For life comes only from life, and death comes always from death. For everything which kills your food, kills your bodies also. And everything which kills your bodies kills your souls also. And your bodies become what your foods are, even as your spirits, likewise, become what your thoughts are” XXIV

“So eat always from the table of God: the fruits of the trees, the grain and grasses of the field, the milk of beasts, and the honey of bees. For everything beyond these is Satan, and leads by the way of sins and of diseases unto death. But the foods which you eat from the abundant table of God give strength and youth to your body, and you will never see disease” XXV

EXCERPTS FROM
THE LIGHT OF KIRPAL

(From question and answer sessions between
Master Kirpal Singh and his initiates.)

Q. 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.

A. 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.

Q. 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.

A. 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 fishes, so many kinds of meats. 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.

Q. 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.

A. If they invite me, I will go. I will take only what is required of me. They cannot force the food in your mouth.

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

A. 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.

Q. Master, if you suddenly have to start cooking meat on your job, or sometimes they ask you to do things which you're not accustomed to doing. . .

A. 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 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.

EXCERPTS FROM *SPIRITUAL ELIXIR*
BY KIRPAL SINGH

Q. Is *Satvic* food diet, as stressed in the *Crown of Life*, best for my development? I am trying this out.

A. The *Satvic* diet prescribed in *Crown of Life* is helpful for your spiritual development. You will find the results in due course. Please note that moderation should always be maintained for having steady progress and sound physical health.

Q. With friends of long standing it is often difficult to ask if a dish is prepared with eggs. How can this be overcome? It is especially difficult for one not advanced on the Path.

A. The initiates should, as a matter of principle, be very cautious in their food articles especially when they have to dine at friends'. It is so simple to inquire humbly and discreetly beforehand and tell your friends that the prohibited food articles are not allowed by your Spiritual Doctor.

Q. Why do I get so fatigued and require so much rest on this diet?

A. This is a personal question involving your own physical endurance. You should select better food combinations from the vegetable and fruit king-

doms which may give you better nutrition. Some Naturopath should be consulted in this behalf.

Q. Will you please explain: Mark 7:14-16, “And when he had called all the people unto Him he said unto them, hearken unto me everyone of you and understand: There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him but the things which come out of him, these are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear?” He did not forbid the eating of meat.

A. I am afraid we do a great injustice to the World-Teachers, by taking isolated sentences and things in fragments rather than taking an overall and integrated view of their teachings. If we study the scriptures carefully, we find that the word “meats” as used in the Gospels, stands for “foods” or “meals.” It is not “meats” alone that purge out of the body, but the refuse of all the foods that we take. The beautiful teachings of Jesus were for all the mankind and not for meat-eating people alone.

Now refer to Matt. 15:11-20, wherein these very words are repeated. These words have no reference to meats, etc. On the contrary, they refer to defilement by eating with “unwashen hands” before taking meals. In Hosea 6:6 as well, it is stated:

I desired mercy and not “sacrifice” and the knowledge of God more than “burnt offerings.”

In the *Essene Gospel of St. John, Ch, XXII*, we have the words of God Himself:

Behold, I have given you every herb upon the face of all the earth, and every tree in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed: to you it shall be for meat.

It is good that you are observing strict dietary regulations which is one of the basic prerequisites. You will appreciate that for obtaining a refined state of mind, one is required to adapt himself or herself to a refined vegetarian, simple and nutritious diet for maintaining the physical body in a normal state.

The gracious Master is now your constant Companion within you, and with your earnest efforts and humble devotion, you will be able to find an approach to Him within to His Radiant Form.

It is gratifying to note that your health is improving and that you have lost some weight. Useful combinations of fruit and vegetables coupled with light physical exercise should help you to have a slim and smart physique.

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 vegetarian-

ism 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.

It must be borne in mind that restriction to pure vegetarian diet is of utmost necessity. Any transgression in this respect is liable to affect your spiritual progress adversely.

The prohibited food flares up carnal desires other than contracting *karmic* debt. Both are highly detrimental and should be avoided scrupulously. I hope you are abiding by all of the rules and that you take my advice in proper perspective in the larger interests of your spiritual progress.

You state that you are healthy now and the doctor advises you not to live on meat. You also state that while away on business you have to oblige your friends by partaking some chicken. In this connection, I would like to remind you that the eating of the prohibited foods will definitely stand in the way of your spiritual progress, without in any way helping you in your illness or in any way extending your lifespan. "Thy days are numbered," is a well known aphorism. So why unnecessarily create *karmic* debts which you may easily avoid? You had better avoid these. It would be much better if you could influence

your friend rather than be influenced by him, for you know of certain things of which he may be ignorant. So in such cases, behave lovingly with others and abstain from taking the prohibited foods. In this lies your benefit.

You are correct in your idea to take very light evening meals, as this is most helpful to early morning meditation. Most initiates on the holy Path have preferred to take very light meals in the evening, which should be taken early before going to sleep. Soami Ji has often stressed the importance of dispensing with night meals for those who wish to enjoy the deep bliss of the holy *shabd*. You may, however, do as best as you can in this matter.

EXCERPTS FROM *MORNING TALKS* BY KIRPAL SINGH

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.

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.



Sant Kirpal Singh Ji at Miami Seaquarium



Sant Kirpal Singh Ji
(1894-1974)

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