

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM JOEL (10/16/21)¹

Q: Is it not cruel or wrong to kill beasts, birds and fish, for human food?

A: I can't answer whether it's wrong or not; certainly seems cruel. And I'm sure that the day will come when it will prove unnecessary. The eating of meat is, of course, a hangover from those days a hundred and fifty to two hundred years ago, when meat, fish, and birds comprised almost the whole of man's menu because there was so little known of agriculture. And except for a few basic products, the natives of all continents and all islands, naturally sought their food not by growing it, because they were mostly nomadic tribes, but by catching it wherever they were. And of course, we are just a very, very short way out from that state of consciousness, and therefore we haven't learned to completely do away with it.

To begin with, it could be done away with—the eating of flesh in private homes. But that involves a study. It should not be undertaken lightly, for this reason: At our present state of unfoldment, we have made the body accustomed to these particular foods and to deprive ourselves of them now, without knowing how to substitute other foods, just brings about more problems than those we already have.

It is very much along another line, also having to do with foods. I'm sure there must be some of you who know that seventy-five percent, at least, of all the diseases of the body could be eliminated merely by proper nutrition. In other words, at least seventy-five percent of all the diseases of mankind are caused by wrong habits of eating. Now, I'm speaking completely on the human plane. And it is for this reason that those on the human plane can not only rid themselves of disease, they can rid themselves of the ravages of age merely by changing their eating habits.

I will give you an illustration in point. In our Masonic bodies in New York State, it was decided about twenty years ago that a fund would be raised every year, contributed to by all of the Masons of the state, to provide research into this very subject of geriatrics, that of age, and how to prevent it. When this research body made its first report about two years ago, this is what it said: When this research was undertaken, the average age of death in the old folks Masonic homes throughout the country—and that was from Maine to California—was about seventy-two years of age. Now, after I think it was eight years of this research, it was eighty-two years of age. But whereas they had formerly died as old men and women at seventy-two, now at eighty, they were not old men and women.

And they said that this entire change was brought about by only two things. One, providing some pleasant occupation for those who lived in the homes, and number two, changing the food they ate. Now, you might say, "How did they change the food they ate?" Well, for one thing, they took away all white flour, all white sugar. They took away all boxed cereals. They took away all of the things that most people buy in their supermarkets, and they substituted for those whole grain cereals, whole grain breads, whole grain cakes, whole grain pancakes

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and hotcakes. They took away white rice and gave them the natural rice. They took away white sugar and gave them natural sugar, brown sugar. And they took away fried foods and all of the things that most of you, I'm sure, women especially, know are absolutely not foods at all. They're merely bulk that you put into the stomach because they're a little cheaper or easier to get than going out to the health food stores.

Now, all of this was on the human plane. But remember that it does explain why the human race is filled with diseases that we are trying to heal spiritually, while after you heal them, they go about contracting them again by going right back to their old eating habits.

Now, it is in this same way that those who know how to eat can do far better with their bodies without meat, without fish—far better. They can have healthier bodies and stronger bodies. But they really must know something about nutrition—how to prepare a salad, or how to fix their cheese, and so forth and so on.

So that eventually, with this higher knowledge of nutrition that is just now coming into human awareness, you're going to find that just physically the world is going to be better off with less disease and less signs of age, and as they get to the place where they can do away with flesh eating, they will find themselves still better off.

Now, as you can see, this has to do entirely with the human level of life. But I have noticed this: As students come into higher and higher awareness of spiritual consciousness, they eat less of meat, less of flesh, and they find it impossible to eat many of these grocery store foods or supermarket foods and begin to be more choosy in the selection of pure foods. In other words, just as an individual coming to the spiritual path eventually loses the ability to use profanity, obscenity; just as they get to a place where vulgarity is distasteful to them and is no part of their consciousness; so it is that the grosser foods lack their charm and begin to fall away. And so it is that in every way, a person, as they become more and more spiritually enlightened, becomes less and less gross in every form of their life.

In our work, in which we do not believe that you can get into heaven by changing your humanhood, but only by attaining spiritual consciousness, we never recommend to any student what they shall eat or what they shall drink; rather on centering all attention on acquiring spiritual consciousness, and letting their own spiritual consciousness change their habits of living.

In the same way, we never ask a person to stop smoking or to stop drinking, or to stop card playing, although I'm sure you know that these have no place whatsoever in spiritual living. And yet, as students go on into higher and deeper realms of consciousness, they find all those things dropping away from them normally and naturally, which is as it should be, because otherwise you are dealing with repression, and when you deal with repression, you sometimes make situations worse than they were before.