

Shri Shirdi Sai Baba

Guruji Shri C. B. Satpathy Message on the occasion of

Ram Navami

January 2004

Some people believe in vegetarianism, which means avoidance of consumption of the flesh of any species, their eggs or any direct bi-product. They limit their food to vegetables, fruits, other agricultural products, milk and milk products of different animals. Some of them go to the extent of even avoiding Brinjals, Onions, Garlic, etc. considering them to be as harmful as non-vegetarian products. By some people these are stated to be non-vegetarian in nature. Strangely, these people take milk of animals considering it to be vegetarian food. Here is situation in which one is to believe that onion is not the out come of a vegetarian plant like Banana but the product of an organic body like an egg laid by a hen.

Non-vegetarians believe in eating the flesh of some species, their milk, eggs of birds, etc. Whereas some people claim themselves to be purely vegetarian in food habits, no non-vegetarian man can ever call him-self to be purely non-vegetarian, since they also take fruits, vegetables and milk etc. Neither any non-vegetarian nor for that purpose any vegetarian person can be said to be pure in that sense of the term. Food items like cakes, biscuits and many others available in the market, certain medicines, tonics etc. Contains different enzymes, materials from non-human species. Many of the items we use on a day-to-day basis like creams, soaps contain animals fats etc. The vegetarian groups belonging to the so-called intellectual class of society are fully aware about the mix up of non-vegetarian elements in the so-called harmless vegetarian items. Yet they take these items beholding some traditional or acquired value of vegetarianism. This has always been the case with the intellectual group. It is expediency, which justifies every thing. Taking out milk from the mouth of a calf and yet worshipping the cow as a mother is justified on the grounds of expediency. It is expediency which forces the human society to hybrid different species of animals and birds ultimately to eat them like Chicken or put them into different uses.

Most of the demonstrative compassion shown towards animals, birds and other species comes out of this utilitarian mindset of the Homo sapiens. The highest compassion to other species in the recorded history of man kind was shown by Mahavira Jain, but how many people understand it and follow it in the right spirit.

Whatever be the justification in killing the members of other species, the mute question is "Does any one wish to be killed". Like, does any human being wish to be killed and be eaten away by any other species except in cases of rare psychological predispositions like suicide etc? Will any hen or goat when asked will say that it wants to be killed? Have not we observed the pain and terror in the eyes and tremor in the bodies of the animals and birds when they are being slaughtered? When the very man who does not want to be killed at any cost or even to be injured kills an animal, is he not being totally insensitive to the pain of others? This logically justifies to the theory that the strong rules or has a moral right to rule and exploit the weaker. This is true in the animal world where instinctively the tiger kills the deer, as intelligence has not developed in it like in human beings. Once its hunger is quenched, it kills no more till hunger propels it instinctively again to kill a prey. The human species, on the other hand, even keeps a stock of dead animals flesh in packed or frozen condition for eating whenever it likes.

The word 'Humanism' (Manav-vada) used by the so called civilized society explains an attitude/act of kindness and understanding towards other human beings to whatever breed they belong. The word 'Manav-vada' does not necessarily include 'Prani-vada'. And this is where the human society falters. The urge to kill animals when further extended as a psychological condition can lead to kill other human beings and strengthens the mental trait of violence. Have not we observed that even today human beings are, at times, cruelly killed by other human beings in the manner in which an animal is killed by another animal. Have not we read that in the places where the sages, saints lived, even animals lost their cruel instincts. Why, because of the non-existence of killer mindset and an attitude of peaceful co-existence of different species. Can't the human species create an atmosphere of peaceful co-existence with the animals? Has not God provided us with enough of agriculture product, fruits, roots, etc. on which human society can subsist!

The question is left open to the reader to decide for himself rationally even if not from the religious or spiritual points of view. A non-vegetarian person may not kill himself or be a part of the process of killing itself, but certainly contributes to such killings as a consumer. To appreciate the issue properly, it would perhaps be better for a non-vegetarian person to visit a place where animals/birds are being killed, observe the painful reactions of

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these harmless species when death is being inflicted on them and then decide whether he should continue to be a non-vegetarian.

The direct experience of things brings knowledge (and not information alone) and creates a conviction whether to do a thing or not do a thing. A progressive man should have direct experience and then decide on the course of action he likes to take. This is truthful living and without truthful living one cannot enter into the path of spiritualism.

(C. B. SATPATHY)
New Delhi
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