

On the Use of Foods

Sangatheka

The subject of foods is always open to discussion and perhaps there will always be differences of opinion. Rigid rules cannot be laid down but certain suggestions may be made.

Let us consider what the Hindus call **sattvic** foods. In general they include all fruits and vegetables which appear above the ground, milk and cream, honey and legumes. Whole grains and pastry being not entirely sattvic, the law may be expressed that that on which the sun rays fall directly is purest. This is a simple law to remember.

Besides this there is another rule which may be followed in Khilvat: to eat of the same foods that the Holy Ones have eaten in their mystical seclusion and this is a good rule. The same principle is in **Mantra Yoga** that the repetition of sacred words in their original language is beneficial is found in following the same food as the Holy Ones. Out of Khilvat, when one is practicing **tasawwuri Murshid** or **fana-fi-Sheikh**, it is well to eat of **the same** foods as the living teacher, but in purdah in the **makam** of **fana-fi-Pir** and the highest stages of development it is well to eat of the foods upon which Holy Ones have subsisted in the past. Most of these agree with well with the sattvic foods and include:

Dates and melons	remind one of Mohammed
Grapes and other fruits, as well as milk and unleavened bread	remind one of Moses
Cream and butter	remind one of Krishna
Rice, curry and cooked vegetables	remind one of Buddha
Honey	remind one of Elijah, John the Baptist
Raw end green vegetables, also milk, etc.	remind one of Zoroaster
Dulse and legumes	remind one of Hebrew prophets
Whole grains and cakes, corn	remind one of Jesus

There is some difference in this list with the foods considered best in modern times and this may be explained by saying that our root vegetables are not only not as good as those which grow above the soil but they are in darkness, not in the sun. The potato and yam are even poorer because they grow entirely below the ground and are connected only quite indirectly with the sun. The potato for this purpose is even poorer than the mushroom which grows in moist places. These are of the earth. Besides that they have not been the food of Holy Ones in the past and while they are very good in the outer life, they do not belong to the sacred foods.

In Khilvat keep as much as possible to the scriptural foods. Unleavened bread is better than leavened but not compulsory. In the preparing of foods burning should be avoided and this means not only no fried foods in Khilvat but even at all times. But the reason against frying is different from that given ordinarily. It is not because of the fat used but because the cells become dead. Therefore even toast is not so good but zwieback is all right. So for breakfast one can give unleavened breads and cakes (can be warmed) or zwieback.

White bread and white leavened cakes should not be used as they are not of the holy foods. Whole meal cakes may be used, cooked with either butter or olive oil but not with cottonseed oil or lard. Mayonnaise or salad dressing should be made from lemon, olive oil, coconut oil or nut oils but not from cottonseed oil, and cornstarch is not advisable but may be used.

Should a mureed have a meditation on a particular prophet or for a particular purpose, he may be given so far as possible what that one ate. Let him assimilate the body of that one in that way as it will help. This brings **tantric** value in the foods.

Great care must be made not to introduce too many new ideas concerning the food in Khilvat but concerning the food eaten ordinarily one should follow the will of the Murshid as much as possible. While the mureed should follow the Murshid, that Murshid will be wisest who follows the Holy Ones of the past, and does not bring in too many innovations. By "innovations" is meant the introduction of foods recommended by the learned of the day. Often the learned of one day prove to be the fools of the next, but the wise whom God has chosen are always wise.

On the whole the Mosaic Code comes as near the ideal as any but while this code has been strongly defended in theory it has not been preserved in practice. It is better not to defend it in theory if one does not follow it in practice than even to criticize it. For the one who defends it in theory and does not follow it is not only a hypocrite but brings shame on the Cause of God. So either keep silent about it or live it, or if you wish, live as near as possible to the method followed since the time of the people of Israel by the Sufis and this will establish a precedent easily followed in the East and in the West.