

9/11 Tribute and Some Food for Thought

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Gain Knowledge Group pays tribute to all the victims of 9/11 and also to the many thousands⁽¹⁾ of innocents that continue to fall prey to the acts of misguided and unrestrained aggression all over the world.

War, Crusade, Terrorism and even Murder ---All of them seemingly different yet fundamentally the result of similar forces at work where one human gives in to reckless rage and is willing (sometimes wanting) to take the life of others.

Surely, the problem of world peace, which has always eluded humanity ever since the beginning of civilization, is not going to get solved miraculously by a special diet prescribed by even the most astute of Problem Solvers. Then again, here is some food for thought.

When was the last time we heard about a vegetarian terrorist slamming a van full of explosives into a building or a vegan that rushed into a crowded marketplace and sprayed bullets on dozens of people or a serial killer that was raised on leaves and fruits?

Mentioning this will immediately bring out the list of vegetarians who were killers, including Adolf Hitler, who became a vegetarian at around age 43, and Pol Pot, who became vegetarian at an advanced age for health reasons, two of the most famous mass murderers of recent times⁽²⁾.

Well, no argument needs to be made to say that there are always exceptions to any rule. But where there are exceptions, there will certainly be more questions that need answers and further investigation will be required. Below are some of them ...

Is there a significant difference between being raised vegetarian and converting to one when you are a full grown adult? While change can happen at any age, most will concur that it is easier to guide a young sapling rather than a full grown plant?

Do vegetarian societies as a whole have lower levels of violence? Perhaps, more important than the food one eats might be the environment that teaches tolerance to other life because in the end, all plants and animals are simply organic matter that will decompose and turn to dust.

Is there some truth to the statement, "We are what we eat."?

Man, over the years, in his quest for survival had to supplement his diet with all kinds of products, both plant and animal, that offered any nutritional value. Do we still need to continue to avail of every possible source of nourishment?

How hard is to substitute a plate of juicy steak or a tender chicken kebab with boiled vegetables and tofu?

I was asked to write about my 9/11 experience by a friend who was worried about my safety on that day since I was among the many that emerged from the World Trade Center after the first plane had hit and had to run for cover as the second plane hit. As I started writing, I felt that my 9/11 story simply paled in comparison to the suffering and loss experienced by numerous other unfortunate downtown denizens and their loved ones. While being fully aware that it has been much easier for me to forget the incident and forgive the perpetrators. I would like to raise the most important questions of them all

Can we simply forgive or better still just forget, in which case there is nothing to forgive? Of course, this does not mean that we forget our loved ones but just the pain and anger which makes us seek vengeance.

Isn't what we need the most, peace of mind?

Shouldn't we just do some yoga and sleep like Koalas?

Wouldn't this be the best way to commemorate 9/11?

Is there a food to forgive or to forget?

References:

1. Global terrorism deaths over the last twenty years.

<http://www.economist.com/blogs/dailychart/2011/09/global-terrorism-deaths>

2. Some parts of this discussion on Vegan Killers are still being debated and we do not offer this as a conclusive reference.

<http://www.vegetariansareevil.com/killers.html>

3. Gain Knowledge Group seeks to promote small-biz for a number of reasons. An environment where small and mid-size businesses can thrive will act as a counter measure against many ills of society. This applies even to violence in society since engaged, productive and contented citizens are less likely to engage in acts of violence.

<http://www.gainknowledgegroup.com>

4. A lot of relevant questions and narrative have been left out for the sake of brevity and to keep the discussion as central to the theme of peace and terrorism as possible, though some amount of deviation could not be avoided. Future pieces will try and capture some of the material that has been skipped. The author is not a strict vegetarian himself.