



1. Bereishit 1:28-29, 9:2-3 (alhatolah translation)

וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ וּכְבֹּשׁוּהָ וּרְדוּ בָדָגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְכָל־חַיָּה הַרְמֵשֶׁת עַל־הָאָרֶץ:
G-d blessed them. G-d said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים הִנֵּה נָתַתִּי לָכֶם אֶת־כָּל־עֵשֶׂב הַיָּבֵשׁ וְזֶרַע זָרַע אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ וְאֶת־כָּל־הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ פְרִי־עֵץ זָרַע זָרַע לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאֹכְלָהּ:
G-d said, “Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree, which bears fruit yielding seed; it will be your food.

וּמִוֹרָאֵיכֶם וּחִתְּכֶם יִהְיֶה עַל כָּל־חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ וְעַל כָּל־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם כָּכֵל אֲשֶׁר תִּרְמָשׁ הָאֲדָמָה וּבְכָל־דָּגַי הַיָּם בְּיַדְכֶם נָתַנּוּ:

The fear of you and the dread of you will be on every animal of the earth, and on every bird of the sky.

Everything that the ground teems with, and all the fish of the sea are delivered into your hand.

כָּל־רֶמֶשׂ אֲשֶׁר הוּא־חַי לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאֹכְלָהּ כַּיֵּרֶק עֲשֹׁב נָתַתִּי לָכֶם אֶת־כָּל־:

Every moving thing that lives will be food for you. As the green herb, I have given everything to you.

אֲדָבָר־בְּשָׂר בְּנַפְשׁוֹ דָּמוֹ לֹא תֹאכְלוּ:

But flesh with its life, its blood, you shall not eat.

2. Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 59b (Davidson Edition translation)

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב אדם הראשון לא הותר לו בשר לאכילה דכתיב (בראשית א, כט) לכם יהיה לאכלה ולכל חית הארץ ולא חית הארץ לכם וכשבאו בני נח התיר להם שנאמר (בראשית ט, ג) כירק עשב נתתי לכם את כל יכול לא יהא אבר מן החי נוהג בו ת"ל (בראשית ט, ד) אך בשר בנפשו דמו לא תאכלו

Rav Yehuda says that Rav says: Meat was not permitted to Adam, the first man, for consumption, as it is written: “And G-d said: Behold, I have given you every herb that brings forth seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree that gives forth seed; for you it shall be for food, and for every animal of the earth, and for every fowl of the air, and for everything that creeps upon the earth, in which there is a living soul, every green herb for food. And it was so” (Genesis 1:29–30). It is derived G-d told Adam: Eating vegetation is permitted to people and animals, but eating the animals of the earth is not permitted to you. But when the children of Noah came, G-d permitted them to eat meat; as it is stated: “Every moving thing that lives shall be for food for you; as the green herb I have given you all” (Genesis 9:3). One might have thought that accordingly, even the prohibition against eating a limb from a living animal does not apply to the descendants of Noah; therefore the verse states: “Only flesh with its life, which is its blood, you shall not eat” (Genesis 9:4).

3. Devarim 12:20-21 (alhatolah translation)

כִּי־יִרְחִיב יי' אֱלֹהֵי אֶת־גְּבֻלְךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר־לְךָ וְאָמַרְתָּ אֹכְלָהּ בְּשָׂר כִּי־תִתְאֵהָב נַפְשְׁךָ לְאָכֹל בְּשָׂר כִּכְל־אָנֹת נַפְשְׁךָ תֹאכַל בְּשָׂר:

When Hashem your G-d shall enlarge your border, as he has promised you, and you shall say, “I want to eat meat,” because your soul desires to eat meat; you may eat meat, after all the desire of your soul.

כִּי־יִרְחַק מִמֶּךָ הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יי' אֱלֹהֵי לְשׁוֹם שְׁמוֹ שָׁם וְזָבַחְתָּ מִבְּקָרְךָ וּמִצֹּאֲנָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יי' לְךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָהּ וְאָכַלְתָּ בִּשְׂעָרֶיךָ בְּכָל־אֹת נַפְשְׁךָ:

If the place which Hashem your G-d shall choose, to put his name there, is too far from you, then you shall kill of your herd and of your flock, which Hashem has given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates, after all the desire of your soul.

4. Sefer Hachinuch Mitzvah 451 (Sefria translation)

ועוד נאמר בטעם השחיטה מן הצואר ובסכין בדוק, כדי שלא נצער בעלי החיים יותר מדאי, כי התורה התירן לאדם למעלתו לזון מהם ולכל צרכיו ולא לצערן חנם. וכבר דברו חכמים הרבה באסור צער בעלי חיים בבבא מציעא (לב, א) ושבת (קכח, ב) אם הוא באסור דאורייתא, והעלו לפי הדומה שאסור דאורייתא הוא (עי' רמב"ם הל' רוצח פ"ג הי"ג).

And we can also say as a reason for slaughter from the neck with a checked knife, [that it is] in order that we not cause too much pain to living beings. As the Torah [only] permitted man - due to his status - to derive nourishment from them for all of his needs, but not to cause them pain for no reason. And the Sages have already spoken much about the prohibition of pain to living beings in Bava Metzia 32a and in Shabbat 128b, [as to] whether it is a Torah prohibition. And it appears to come out that it is a Torah prohibition (See Mishneh Torah, Laws of Murderer and the Preservation of Life 13:13).

5. Rema, Shulchan Aruch Even Haezer 5:14 (Rabbi Torczyner translation)

כל דבר הצריך לרפואה או לשאר דברים, לית ביה משום איסור צער בעלי חיים (איסור והיתר הארוך סימן נ"ט), ולכן מותר למרוט נוצות מאוזות חיות וליכא למיחש משום צער בעלי חיים (מהרא"י סי' ק"ס). ומכל מקום העולם נמנעים, דהוי אכזריות:

For medical benefit or other benefit, there is no problem of paining animals. Therefore, one may pluck a live goose's feather [to use as a quill] without concern for paining animals - but we do not do this, for it is cruel.

6. Preface to the translation Chazon Hatzimchonut Vehashalom by Rav A.Y. Kook by Jonathan Rubenstein

"Hazon Hatzimchonut veHashalom" ("A Vision (lit. "The Vision...") of Vegetarianism and Peace") is a compilation of excerpts from two of Rav Kook's early essays, "Afikim Banegev", ("Streams in the Desert") and "Talele Orot" ("Dewdrops of Light" or "Fragments of Light"), "Afikim Banegev" was first published, in serialized form in a Berlin Hebrew monthly, HaPeles ("The Balance") in 1903 and 1904; "Talele Orot" originally appeared in 1910 in Takhemoni ("Wise Counsel"), a student Hebrew periodical at the University of Berne, Switzerland, The complete essays appear in various later editions of Rav Kook's writings which are listed in the bibliography, along with the original publications. Both of these essays include sections which deal with animals and the interpretation of mitzvot and other practices which concern animals; they are not, however, as one author states, "Kook's essays on vegetarianism and man's duties to the animal..." for they deal in the main with broader concerns of which "vegetarianism" is but one aspect. Rav Kook's disciple, Rabbi David Cohen, collected this material and gave it the title, "A Vision of Vegetarianism and Peace." It was originally presented at a conference of religious vegetarians and was published in 1961 in a volume of essays in memory of Rav Kook's grandson, who drowned in 1959 at the age of twenty. It appeared as a separate pamphlet in 1983. The editor divided the work into thirty-nine sections, of which the first thirty-two are excerpted from "Afikim Banegev" and the final seven from "Talele Orot." He also gives titles to each section which pertain to its particular content. It should be made clear that neither the divisions, nor the titles of each section, nor, for that matter, the title of the work as a whole, appear in the original essays. Therefore, while the sections do represent a structuring of the work according to its content, the beginning of any given section may logically or stylistically follow closely the ending of the previous section. The division of the text and the titles serve a useful purpose, but the reader should keep in mind that the work was written in a continuous form. In some instances, the editor skipped sections of the original essay, or the text departs from the original in some way; these instances have been indicated in footnotes...

7. Selections from Rav Kook's Chazon Hatzimchonut Vehashalom, courtesy of Rabbi Torczyner:

- There is a natural drive for righteousness, and this will return - Paragraph 1
 - It would be a desecration for this enslavement [of animals] to be imprinted eternally upon the world of G-d, who is good to all and whose mercy is on all of His creations... Especially, when the Torah has already testified that there was a time when Mankind, as a whole, aspired to be elevated to this high ethical level.
- Our sins have dragged us down – Paragraphs 3 and 4
 - 3: There is here [in Deuteronomy 12:20-21] a hidden rebuke by the wise, and a boundary-setting alert. It is as if to say that so long as your inner ethic is not repulsed by eating animal flesh in the way that it is repulsed by human flesh [you shall eat animal flesh]... For when the time comes that human ethics are

revolted by animal flesh because of the ethical revulsion involved, then you will not desire at all to eat any flesh, and you shall not eat it.

- 4: After the [physical] weakening of the human being, which flowed from his ethical fall, it became appropriate to eat flesh.
- And so we may eat meat, to survive while we grow – Paragraphs 2 and 1
 - 2: The Torah prepared its illumination in the measure appropriate for Man – with the calculation of the G-d who knows all, giver of the Torah – such that through this Man will also come to intellectual illumination.
 - 1: There is no doubt for any intelligent, thinking person, that the reign mentioned in the Torah, "And they shall rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the heavens and the beasts and the entire land and all that crawls upon the land," does not refer to a tyrannical ruler's reign, exploiting nation and servants only to execute his personal wishes.
- Spiritual growth should bring us to illumination – Paragraphs 7-8
 - 7: Our holy Torah is named "Torah [guide]", indicating that its nature is to guide us on the path of life and goodness.
 - 8: Covering the blood of beasts and birds is a kind of Divine protest, opposite the permission which results, fundamentally, from Man's damaged spiritual state... the Torah says, "Cover the blood, hide the source of your humiliation, and your ethical weakness."...

8. Rabbi J. David Bleich, Contemporary Halachic Problems Volume 3 Chapter 10:

One modern-day scholar who is often cited as looking upon vegetarianism with extreme favor is the late Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook. It is indeed the case that in his writings Rabbi Kook speaks of vegetarianism as an ideal and points to the fact that Adam did not partake of the flesh of animals. In context, however, Rabbi Kook makes those comments in his portrayal of the eschatological era. He regards man's moral state in that period as being akin to that of Adam before his sin and does indeed view renunciation of enjoyment of animal flesh as part of the heightened moral awareness which will be manifest at that time. But Rabbi Kook is emphatic, nay, vehement, in admonishing that vegetarianism dare not be adopted as a norm of human conduct prior to the advent of the eschatological era. Rabbi Kook advances what are, in effect, four distinct arguments in renunciation of vegetarianism as a goal toward which contemporary man ought to aspire:...

(i) Addressing himself to members of the vegetarian movement, Rabbi Kook remarks almost facetiously that one might surmise that all problems of human welfare have been resolved and the sole remaining area of concern is animal welfare. In effect, his argument is that there ought to be a proper ordering of priorities. Rabbi Kook is quite explicit in stating that enmity between nations and racial discrimination should be of greater moral concern to mankind than the well-being of animals and that only when such matters have been rectified should attention be turned to questions of animal welfare.

(ii) Given the present nature of the human condition, maintains Rabbi Kook, it is impossible for man to sublimate his desire for meat. The inevitable result of promoting vegetarianism as a normative standard of human conduct, argues Rabbi Kook, will be that man will violate this norm in seeking self-gratification. Once taking the life of animals is regarded as being equal in abhorrence to taking the life of man, it will transpire, contends Rabbi Kook, that in his pursuit of meat, man will regard cannibalism as no more heinous than the consumption of the flesh of animals. The result will be, not enhanced respect for the life of animals, but rather debasement of human life."

(iii) Man was granted dominion over animals, including the right to take their lives for man's own benefit, in order to impress upon him his spiritual superiority and heightened moral obligations. Were man to accord animals the same rights he accords fellow human beings he would rapidly degenerate to the level of animals in assuming that he is bound by standards of morality no different from those espoused by brute animals.

(iv) In an insightful psychological observation, Rabbi Kook remarks that even individuals who are morally degenerate seek to channel their natural moral instincts in some direction. Frequently, they seek to give expression to moral drives by becoming particularly scrupulous with regard to some specific aspect of moral behavior. With almost prescient knowledge of future events, Rabbi Kook argues that, were vegetarianism to become the norm, people might become quite callous with regard to human welfare and human life and express their instinctive moral feelings in an exaggerated concern for animal welfare. These comments summon to mind the spectacle of Germans watching with equanimity while their Jewish neighbors were dispatched to crematoria and immediately thereafter turning their attention to the welfare of the household pets that had been left behind.

Despite the foregoing, vegetarianism is not rejected by Judaism as a valid lifestyle for at least some individuals. There are, to be sure, individuals who are repulsed by the prospect of consuming the flesh of a living creature. It is not the case that an individual who declines to partake of meat is ipso facto guilty of a violation of the moral code. On the contrary, Scripture states, "and you will say: 'I will eat meat,' because your soul desires to eat meat; with all the desire of your soul may you eat meat" (Deuteronomy 12:20). The implication is that meat may be consumed when there is desire and appetite for it as food, but may be eschewed when there is no desire and, a fortiori, when it is found to be repugnant. The question is one of perspective. Concern arises only when such conduct is elevated to the level of a moral norm.

9. Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 109a (Davidson Edition translation)

תניא רבי יהודה בן בתירא אומר בזמן שבית המקדש קיים אין שמחה אלא בבשר שנאמר וזבחת שלמים ואכלת שם ושמחת לפני ה' אל-ך ועכשיו שאין בית המקדש קיים אין שמחה אלא ביין שנאמר ויין ישמח לבב אנוש

It was taught in a baraita that Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira says: When the Temple is standing, rejoicing is only through the eating of sacrificial meat, as it is stated: "And you shall sacrifice peace-offerings and you shall eat there and you shall rejoice before the Lord your G-d" (Deuteronomy 27:7). And now that the Temple is not standing and one cannot eat sacrificial meat, he can fulfill the mitzva of rejoicing on a Festival only by drinking wine, as it is stated: "And wine that gladdens the heart of man" (Psalms 104:15).

10. Rambam Hilchot Shevitat Yom Tov 6:17-18 (Sefaria translation)

...וְחַיֵּב אָדָם לְהִיּוֹת בְּהוֹן שְׂמֵחַ וְטוֹב לֵב הוּא וּבְנָיִו וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּבְנֵי בֵיתוֹ וְכָל הַנְּלוּיִם עָלָיו שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (דברים טז יד) "וְשִׂמְחֶתָּ בְּחַגֶּדְךָ" וְגו'. אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁשֶׂמֶחַ הָאֱמוּנָה כָּאֵן הֵיא קָרִיב שְׂמֵחַ כִּמוֹ שֶׁאֲנִי מְבָאֲרִין בְּהַלְכוֹת חֲגִיגָה יֵשׁ בְּכָלֵל אוֹתָהּ שְׂמֵחָה לְשִׂמְחָה הוּא וּבְנָיִו וּבְנָיִו בֵּיתוֹ כֹּל אֶחָד כְּרֵאֵי לוֹ:

...One is required to rejoice and be cheerful on those days, along with his wife, children, grandchildren, and all his dependents, as it is written: "You shall rejoice at your festival, you and your son and your daughter, your male and female servants..." (Deuteronomy 16:14). Although the festivity mentioned here refers to the peace-offering, as we are about to explain in the section concerning the rules of the pilgrim-offering, it includes the appropriate rejoicing of each man and his children and the members of his household.

כִּיצַד. הַקְּטָנִים נוֹתֵן לָהֶם קְלִיּוֹת נְאֻגוּזִים וּמִגְדָּנוֹת. וְהַנְּשִׂים קוֹנֶה לָהֶן בְּגָדִים וְתַכְשִׁיטִין נְאִים כְּפִי מְמוֹנֵן. וְהַאֲנָשִׁים אוֹכְלִין בֶּשֶׂר וְשׁוֹתִין יַיִן שְׂאִין שְׂמֵחָה אֶלָּא בְּבֶשֶׂר וְאִין שְׂמֵחָה אֶלָּא בַּיַּיִן. וְכִשְׁהוּא אוֹכֵל וְשׁוֹתֵה חֵיב לְהַאֲכִיל לַגֵּר לִיתוֹם וְלְאֵלְמָנָה עִם שְׂאֵר הָעֲנִיִּים הָאֲמֻלָּלִים. אֲבָל מִי שְׁנוֹעֵל דְּלִתוֹת חֲצָרוֹ וְאוֹכֵל וְשׁוֹתֵה הוּא וּבְנָיִו וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְאִינוּ מְאָכִיל וּמִשְׁקָה לְעֲנִיִּים וְלַמְּרִי נֶפֶשׁ אִין זוֹ שְׂמֵחָה מִצְנָה אֶלָּא שְׂמֵחָה כְּרָסוֹ...

The children, for example, should be given parched grain, nuts, and sweetmeats; the womenfolk should be presented with pretty clothes and trinkets according to one's means; the menfolk should eat meat and drink wine, for there is no real rejoicing without the use of meat and wine. While eating and drinking, one must feed the stranger, the orphan, the widow, and other poor unfortunates. Anyone, however, who locks the doors of his courtyard and eats and drinks along with his wife and children, without giving anything to eat and drink to the poor and the desperate, does not observe a religious celebration but indulges in the celebration of his stomach...

11. Magen Avraham Orach Chaim 696:15, 529:3

וע"ק דביוורה דעה סי' שמ"א פסק דאפי' בשבת אם ירצה שלא לאכול בשר הרשות בידו וכמ"ש תר"י וז"ל שאינו מחוייב שיאכל בשר ויין וכו'

It is even more difficult, because in Shulchan Aruch Yoreh De'ah Siman 341 it was concluded that even on Shabbat if he does not wish to eat meat, he has permission [to abstain], as the students of Rabbeinu Yonah wrote, and this is their language: "Because one is not required to eat meat [and drink] wine..."

ומצוה לאכול בשר (רמב"ם סמ"ק ב"ה יש"ש)

And it is a mitzvah to eat meat...

12. Rabbi J. David Bleich, Contemporary Halachic Problems Volume 3 Chapter 10:

Thus, even if there is no normative obligation to partake of meat on Yom Tov, abstaining from meat on Yom Tov because of considerations of vegetarianism would not have been looked upon with favor by the Sages.