

Food in Religious Texts as in the Literature of *The Holy Bible*

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Abstract

“A Hungry man is an angry man”. Accordingly, the power of hunger makes all human beings to run in the same way that is in the goal of searching for food. Though the ambitions of everyone's life vary, food has the magical power to join together in the one way. Many proverbs, religious texts, science and medicine exhibit the importance of food for the human body. It gives not only the energy but also the purpose of living. The ‘Holy Bible’ is one among the religious texts. Jesus Christ is the central part of this book. The part of Genesis deals the story of Jacob who gets many blessings from food. It depicts how lifeless life becomes the liveliest life due to the blessings of food. Jacob was the son of Isaac and Rebecca and had a twin brother named Esau. Jacob means “supplanter”. Due to his cunning, he gave some bean soup to his hunger brother. When the taste buds tasted the food which made by Jacob, he got the rights as the first born son from his brother. Moreover, he obtained the whole-hearted blessings from his father through the delicious food. Thus, the food gives the meaning to the meaningless life of Jacob and the story reveals that each rice is the stepping stone of the blessings and prosperous life and prevents to waste the food.

Food is the source of human's lives. It is the fundamental of life. Without food every living being in this world is nothing. In this modern society each and every one is running in different directions to achieve something. Some run to obtain their goal and some run to forget their bitter past. School students are running to get success in Examinations. College students are running behind in both love and search their own identity in the society. Unemployed run for their jobs and the employers run to catch the bus to go to their work. Parents are running to fulfil their children's needs. Why then, the ripen old people though they have satisfied to complete their all duty, they are still running to search their golden memories.

The entire above runner's speed will be broken when they get hungry. ‘A Hungry man is an angry man’. Accordingly, the power of hunger makes all of them to run in the same way that is searching for food. Though, their ambitions and running speed may vary, the hunger has the magical power to join them in one way.

Many Proverbs, Religious Texts, Science and Medicine tell the importance of food for the human's body. The society intermingles with different religions, different race, various culture and landscape. Though the society splits into many dimensions, each religious book insists that everyone should be holy. The religious books such as the 'Bhagavat Geeta', the 'Holy Bible', and the 'Quran', etc., teach the way of truth and make those who walk in the way of truth to be holy. Thus, the religious books are loaded with good values and morals. So, all these books are considered as 'the Holy Books'.

Bible is divided into Old Testament and New Testament. Jesus Christ is the central part of the Holy Bible. The book is full of good morals and reveals the truth. If a book makes the man to lead a happy and truthful life, it must be considered as common for all. Likewise, those who are in broken-hearted and feeling lonely can be cured by the verses of the Bible. It gives full of hope and helps to come out from all worldly worries and makes to breathe peacefully. So, the Holy Bible does not belong to the Christianity. It belongs to those who search for their own self, searching for truth and peace.

The necessity of the food in daily life and how the food makes the meaningless life into the meaningful life is analysed through the story of the Bible. Genesis is the subdivision of the Old Testament, which deals with the story of Jacob and how he gets countless blessings through the food and how the food changes his lifeless life into the liveliest life.

There was a man named Isaac lived in Canaan along with his wife Rebecca and his two sons Esau and Jacob. They were twin brothers. Esau was elder than Jacob. Isaac got grace in the eyes of God due to his obedience to God. So, God blessed him abundantly and he became very rich in the country. "Isaac sowed seed in that land, and that year he harvested a hundred times as much as he had sown, because the Lord blessed him. He continued to prosper and became a very rich man." (Genesis 26:12-13)

Esau, one of Isaac's sons became a skilled hunter. Due to his passion of hunting, he was never in home. He led the outdoor life. But his youngest twin brother Jacob was contrary to him. He was very calm, and he loved to stay at home. As Isaac gave more importance to appetizing, he was captivated by what Esau had hunted and cooked. So, he devoted towards Esau rather than Jacob. In simultaneously, Rebecca loved Jacob due to him calm nature and stayed at home. Besides, he spent most of the time with his mother. While she was cooking, he used to help her. Through her, he learned cooking and also how to attract others by the homemade tasty foods. This cooking was the trump card to uplift his life finally.

One day Esau returned to home with tired of Hunting. At that time, Jacob was cooking some bean soup. In order to his hunger, he was attracted by the smell of the soup. It was red in colour and he asked him to give some soup to drink. “One day while Jacob was cooking some bean soup, Esau came in from hunting. He was hungry and said to Jacob, “I am starving; give me some of that red stuff.”(Genesis 25:29) Jacob used this chance very tactfully. For the compensation of soup, Jacob asked him rights as the first-born son. As Jacob said, “First make a vow that you will give me your rights”. (Genesis 25:33) Esau made the vow and gave his rights to Due to his hunger; Esau ignored his rights of the first-born son and accepted the agreement. Then, Jacob gave some bread and bean soup. When Esau’s taste buds tasted the drink, he became palatable. The blessings of food began to reflect in the life of Jacob. “Jacob gave some bread and some of the soup. He ate and drank and then got up and left. That was all Esau cared about his rights as the first-born son.” (Genesis 25:34) So that, he obtained the rights of the first-born son. Without knowing Jacob’s cunning, Esau drank satisfied and woke up. Thus, Jacob got the rights of the first-born son through the tactful homespun food.

After that, Isaac became old and feeble and also, he lost his sight. So, he wanted to give the blessings to his beloved son Esau what God gave to him. Furthermore, he wanted to eat delicate food stomach fully with satisfaction. Because of his weakness, he could never bless his son whole-heartedly. In order to his agony, he might be cursed instead of blessed.

He believed that food could be the best medicine to ease from his weak-ill. It portrays the truth, “Food is the good medicine”. As he wanted to bless his son whole- heartedly, he called Esau and asked him to bring toothsome foods which should prepared by his hands. This mentality of Isaac can be practised in this modern society. During the family occasions and marriages, the grand banquet is given to those who come to bless them. Because, if they eat with elatedness, they will bless the marriage couple whole-heartedly. It reveals the truth that food alone is the source of one’s blessed, fulfilled and happy life. It gives energy to the human’s body. Moreover, people get contentment in food only. From that contentment, it could be very happy to bless his son whole heartedly.

On account of Isaac’s desire, Esau took bow and arrows, moved into the forest. Rebecca was hearing while they were talking. So, she wanted to Jacob should get the blessings from his father. So, she made the plan to deceive Isaac. For that he would bless Jacob instead of Esau. She believed that she could spell bound Isaac by her rich and tempting food. She called Jacob and asked him to bring two fat young goats from the flock to cook for his father. But Jacob was very afraid to deceive his father. If Isaac found out his act of deceiving, he would get curse instead of blessings. But Rebecca strongly believed that she could prepare a nice and distinctive

food which could enthrall Isaac's tongue towards her side. So, she said, "Let any against you fall on me, my son; just do as I say, and go and get the goats for me." (Genesis 27:13)

Rebecca's cooking based on mesmerizing Isaac. Here, Rebecca is the model figure for how the wife should be strong in cooking and how to get unconditional and everlasting love and affection from the husband through her spicy and mouth-watering dishes. It insists every woman know to about the value of the homemade cooking and it makes everyone to be aware of good for nothing foods such as Junk foods and Package food items and also it paints the close relationship between woman and food for her happy and romantic marriage life.

After that, she gave the best cloth of Esau to Jacob and asked him to put on and she put the skin of the goats on his arms. Because Esau was a hairy man. The skin of the goats made the outward appearance of Jacob as Esau's. She gave him the well-done food along with the bread what she had baked. In this society, there are two necessary things to do to catch the heart of hungers that is the way of calling the guest and the way of serving. It definitely increases the taste of the food utmost whether it is good or bad. The aroma of food is not only lies on the food but also it lies in both. Accordingly, Jacob was very polite when he was calling his father for having the meal. As Jacob called, "I am your elder son Esau; I have done as you told me. Please sit up and eat some of the meat that I have brought you, so that you can give me your blessing". (Genesis 27:19)

Isaac woke up from his bed and ate the food what Jacob had served. Consequently, the food was very yummy to the tongue of Isaac due to his serving. He ate as much as could. Finally, Jacob gave some wine to drink. Through the way of serving, Isaac got satisfied and fulfilled. As the reflection of his satisfaction, he kissed Jacob. Isaac got refreshment, fulfilment and rejoicing through this food. So, he blessed Jacob whole-heartedly. But Esau missed these blessings due to his outdoor life and ignorance of his rights of the first- born son. But, Jacob obtained the blessing of Isaac due to his indoor life with his mother and his obedience to his mother's words.

So, Isaac blessed his son Jacob,

The pleasant smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed. May God give you dew from heaven and make your fields fertile! May he give you plenty of corn and wine! May nations be your servants, and may peoples bow down before you. May you rule over all relatives and may your mother's descendants bow down before you. May those who curse you be cursed, and may those who bless you be blessed (Genesis 27:27-29)

Accordingly, Jacob became rich and became the father of the twelve clans in the end.

Thus, food gave the blessed life to the bareness life of Jacob. It gave valuable meaning for his living. The story of Jacob helps to realise the valueless gift of food which is not only enrich one's body but also it paves the way for healthy and happy life and also it makes to know the precious value of every sweats and tears which is shed by the Agrarians. Furthermore, those who know the treasured and inestimable values of the food no dare to waste the food and it makes sense that each rice is the stepping stone for one's blessed life. So, everyone should start to get on the blessing steps through having food on time with correct quantity. It will help to live the heaven life in the earth. Particularly, women who are the source of the others get energy; never take food at correct time. This factor leads every woman to suffer in joint paints and weakness at the young stage. Soon they get old and become ineligible to climb the blessing steps. These women must go and ask to the refugees about the real meaning of the food. The people those who are affected by natural calamities such as cyclone, earthquake, recently Kaja storm, etc., these people will say the real meaning of the food from their bitter experience.

Before they suffer these calamities, they may waste the food. They may not consider food as the main purpose of life. Their whole life will be woven around earning money. They have been running behind money like the running horse with snaffle in the game. Due to their money-mindedness love for one another has become frozen.

Some people may earn money from evil ways such as chain snatching, ATM hacking, etc. Without any compassion for others they do these acts of meanness. Some people might earn money through hardworking. Today, all want to settle in high posts with good salary. So, these people work hard to reach this position. Through their hard work they succeed in Exams like TNPSC, UPSC, SET, etc. Though they pass, some evildoers cross their ways and snatch these hard working people's opportunity to get jobs through their corrupted money. At last, it is pathetic to say that all of their lives come into the road when they affected by the Natural disasters. Now, they are all take each other's hands one and run to search their food for surviving. Due to these pathetic situations, many of them have been stretching their helping hands before them. Even students send their share from their pocket money. It depicts there is still moisture in every human's heart. They are not being fully stone hearted. True love, compassion, helping tendency still live in this society. This bonding emphasis that Unity is Strength. So, everyone should come to realise that food is not the part of life, but it is the source of one's blessed, fulfilled, happy and healthy life. Besides, the food must be prepared by own self without adding any synthetic spices and chemicals.

Everyone should be aware of junk foods and preservatives poultry products which should be prohibited. The food should not be harmful to anyone for lead the happy and healthy life. Therefore, all should prefer the home made food items without adding any chemical substances are well and good rather than the package foods and drinks. The heavenly home spun food only gives strength and energy to the human's body and his soul. In addition to the role of Rebecca represents that cooking is the most powerful weapon to arrest every member in the family. Thus the story of Jacob makes sense that food is not just a curry, it is the source of one's blessed, fulfilled, happy and healthy life.

Work Cited

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