

# Path to Siva

A Catechism for Youth

Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami

Lesson 49

**Why Are We Vegetarians?**

SOUP,  
MELTS ON A FRESH ROTI, SURROUNDED BY SPICY S

MEAL I  
S HEALTHY NOT ONLY FOR OUR BODY, BUT FOR OUR





# Why adopt vegetarianism?



**People adopt vegetarianism for five main reasons:**

- 1. dharma,**
- 2. karma,**
- 3. consciousness,**
- 4. health**
- 5. environment.**



# 1. We do not kill for food.

First, dharma declares that we should  
NOT kill creatures to feed ourselves.

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## 2. Eating meat creates negative karma.

Second, those who eat meat are participating indirectly in violent acts against the animal kingdom.

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This creates negative karma, bringing to us suffering in the future.





### 3. Impact on our consciousness...

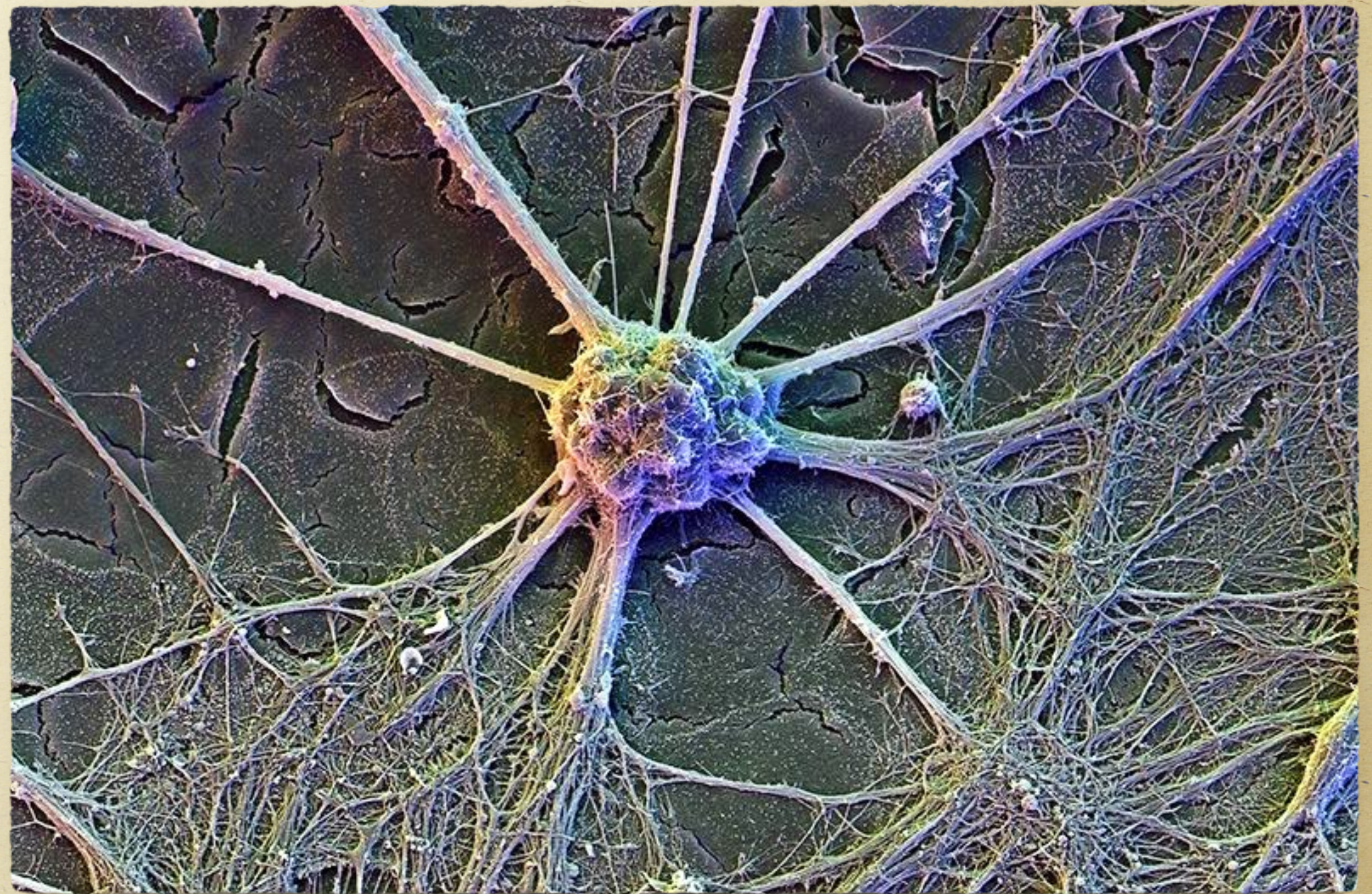
A third reason is the impact of eating meat on our consciousness.

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At the moment of death, the terror and torture of the animal is biochemically locked into the flesh.

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When we consume the meat, we take that animal's fear into our own body and it negatively affects our consciousness.





## 4. Impact of meat on our health....

The fourth reason is health.

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Eating meat has been linked to a variety of illnesses, including cancer.

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There is no nutritional reason humans have to eat meat.

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Modern research confirms that a vegetarian diet is a fundamentally healthy diet.





# 5. Impact on the environment

Reason five, the huge industry that raises meat for human consumption is bad for the environment.

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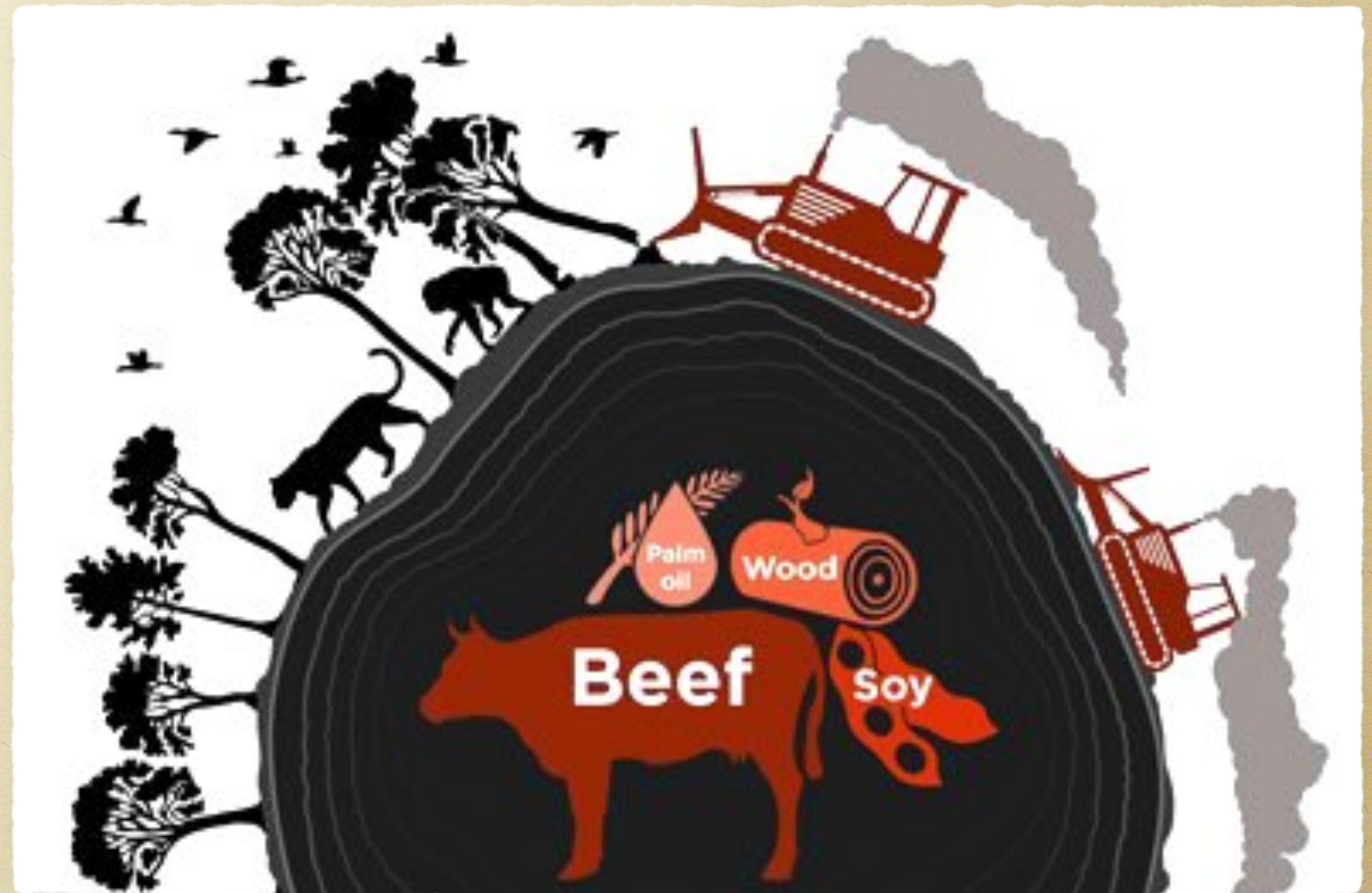
It contributes to climate change, destruction of rain forests, loss of topsoil and the extinction of species.





# Hunger and global warming

If the resources currently spent on raising beef, pigs and chickens were instead used to produce vegetarian food, hunger could be reduced worldwide and global warming largely allayed.





# Vegetarianism - a global trend

Today vegetarianism is a global movement.

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There are vegetarians among all the religions as well as those who have no religion.





# Vegetarians in the world

Three percent of Americans are vegetarians, with eight percent among teens.

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In the UK, 15 percent of teens declare themselves vegetarians.

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India has the largest number of vegetarians in the world, more than 500 million, 30 percent of the population.





# Saivam also means vegetarianism!

Our saints proclaimed vegetarianism to be man's natural and noble diet.

The very name of our religion in Tamil, *Saivam*, also means vegetarianism!





# Gurudeva says...

Vegetarianism is a natural and obvious way to live with a minimum of hurt to other beings.

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In my fifty years of ministry, it has become quite evident that vegetarian families have far fewer problems than those who are not vegetarian.





# QUESTIONS for Lesson 49?

**49.1** Dharma declares that to feed ourselves  
(Check the correct answer)

- ☐ A. It is fine to kill other creatures
- ☐ B. We should not kill other creatures

**49.2** Eating meat, and thereby participating indirectly in violent acts against the animal kingdom  
(Check the correct answer)

- ☐ A. Creates negative karma, bringing to us suffering in the future
- ☐ B. Does not create any negative karma

**49.3** When we consume the meat  
(Check the incorrect answer)

- ☐ A. It creates a positive state of consciousness
- ☐ B. We take that animal's fear into our own body
- ☐ C. It negatively affects our consciousness

**49.4** Consuming meat  
(Check the incorrect answer)

- ☐ A. Provides an essential source of nutrition
- ☐ B. Has been linked to a variety of illnesses
- ☐ C. Is not required for nutritional reasons

**49.5** The huge industry that raises meat for human consumption  
(Check the incorrect answer)

- ☐ A. Contributes to climate change
- ☐ B. Has no relationship to the destruction of rain forests
- ☐ C. Contributes to loss of topsoil