

Judaism - Eating Kosher

When I first saw exactly what this assignment was, I was hesitant because I am not at all of Jewish faith and wasn't exactly sure what I wanted to do for this paper. I didn't know of any synagogues in the immediate area so I marked that off my list, I was going to do the blessings, but then realized I didn't want to have to deal with the translations from Hebrew to English for those, and I wasn't really looking forward to eating Kosher because I am a guy who likes to eat what I want when I want to eat it. After weighing my options, I decided on eating Kosher because I felt like it would be the most attainable spiritual aid for me even though I would have to actually work to make sure I was doing what I was supposed to be. I then figured, I have a friend who is Jewish, B- , she would most definitely be interested in helping me out with keeping to eating kosher although she doesn't do it 100% of the time.

I met with B- and told her of this assignment and we decided that I would use this spiritual aid from Wednesday to Friday and she would join me in the process. As I stated before, I am used to eating whatever I want exactly when I want it; and I was not used to having to think if it was acceptable for me to eat beef with dairy products or if what I was eating contained pork or not. I knew from the beginning that this was going to be a tough task for someone like me who had a great love for food. I don't eat breakfast so I only had to deal with eating 6 meals throughout the assignment, and I stayed away from snacks during this time simply because I was confused at times as to what I could and couldn't have. During lunch for all 3 days, I enjoyed tuna salad which was graciously prepared by my friend B- . While eating lunch each day, I always thought to myself, "man, this really isn't too bad, it's a lot easier than I thought it would be," then dinner time would come around and I remembered why I thought it would be so difficult. I live 2 blocks from Burger King, Allsup's, and McDonalds, and I make regular trips to these places either at dinner time or for late night snacks. Each night I would ask B- if what I felt like eating was acceptable for us to eat and each time she would try to explain to me "yes, that is acceptable and here's why," or "no, that's not kosher and here's why." I couldn't believe how unbelievably hard this was for me and how easily it seemed to come to her. I honestly don't know how I would have been able to truly keep to the program if it weren't for her and her knowledge of the faith. For dinner two of the three nights, we had some sort of dish that I honestly wasn't very fond of, but it was composed mostly of deer meat that her dad had killed a couple of weeks before. She explained to me that it was acceptable to eat deer meat as long as it was killed and prepared in the correct manner. She told me that the deer was actually raised by family friends and that they had given the deer to her father as a gift. Her family and these family friends often traded things to ensure a good relationship between the two families because they didn't have many other Jewish families living around them. On Friday night, the final meal of my 'kosher cleanse,' she prepared chicken and some sort of pasta for me that was actually kosher because it had no non-kosher ingredients. It was delicious and I told her that if I could just eat that for every meal I think I would be alright! She was happy that she was able to prepare something that I actually enjoyed eating rather than something I was only eating because my grade depended on it.

All in all I had a very good experience during my three day 'kosher cleanse' and learned to appreciate that particular part of the Jewish faith. I learned that eating kosher is incredibly difficult for someone like myself who isn't used to it, but can also be difficult for someone such as B- who knows how to eat it but has to deal with the outside world around her not typically trying to comply with the kosher ways. I also learned that the reasoning behind the whole process of eating kosher and preparing the meals accordingly all come from instructions received by the people from the Torah. Although I don't intend to ever go back to eating kosher again, I am very happy that I was encouraged to try it for a few days just so I was able to tap into the mind of someone different from myself and kind of see the world from another perspective. It was a very interesting three days that I will definitely not soon forget.