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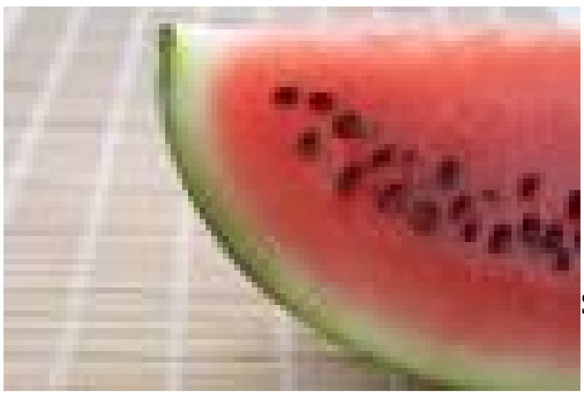
Watermelon Wisdom

Ed Hays | Jul. 24, 2009

In these summer days when you next enjoy eating watermelon, recall a saying of the followers of the Prophet Mohammed: ?A watermelon produces a thousand good works!? This Islamic saying originated when watermelons were mostly eaten out-of-doors so, their seeds dropped to the ground to become the source of countless new watermelon plants.



Seeds are messy, so modern scientists have created seedless watermelons. While appearing to be an innocent folk proverb, this Islamic saying about watermelons contains superior spiritual advice. Our good works, like watermelons, also contain seeds, invisible yet richly fertile with potential for more good. Watermelon wisdom says to be lavishly careless in doing good deeds so that the tiny invisible seeds within your works will be generously scattered everywhere. Pray that as you leave the scene of your crime of kindness, you will leave behind you a long and broad trail of tiny fertile love seeds.

Insure I do all my good deeds secretly,
being sloppily careless in my generosity,
so I?ll scatter everywhere the rich seeds
inside the love gifts you have given me.

From *A Book of Wonders* by Ed Hays

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The Vow of Holy Abundance
Poverty of possessions is a highly promoted religious ideal. It can include a vow of poverty and disciplines of self-denial of physical luxuries, fine foods, and drink. The spiritual path of asceticism especially targets a poverty of possessions where the ideal is to have none! Religious poverty easily gives rise to guilt over material possessions, as when Gandhi rightly said, ?If you have clothing in your closet that you don?t wear, then it is stolen goods. Stolen from those who lack clothing.? Extreme poverty can be a spirituality of denial that idealizes stark, barren living quarters, that abstains from physical comfort, delicious tasting foods, and owning material things. The Teacher of Galilee never promoted a lifestyle of material poverty! Instead, he called his disciples to simplicity of life by sharing their goods with others in need and by being liberated from artificially created
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cravings. He taught holy abundance instead of holy deficiency saying, ?I have come that you might have life and have it in great abundance.? His abundance of life didn?t require owning many possessions, but rather in being possessed by God. Seek first an abundance of Divine Mystery, and simplicity of live will naturally appear in your life, and in great abundance.

Fervently I desire to be possessed
by you, the Giver of all good things,
so to enjoy the great glut of wealth
and happiness of those totally yours.

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Prayer action suggestion:
Share a watermelon. Share the seeds of your goodness.

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