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Q & A File Number 22-A-4

Subject Swine's flesh

IT 206-207

ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE—QUESTION AND ANSWER FILE

Your third question relates to the use of swine's flesh and the statement in Volume 1, of the Testimonies, page 207 that "If it is the duty of the church to abstain from swine's flesh, God will discover it to more than two or three. He will teach his church their duty." This statement was published in the year 1858, written in a message relative to the teachings to individuals who were extremists and among other things, they were advocating the non-use of swine's flesh. You will observe at the foot of the page a note written by James White in which he calls attention to the fact that this was written "nearly five years before the great vision of 1863, in which the light upon health reform was given." The first writing of what was shown to Ellen White in that vision of June 6, 1863 given at Otsego, Michigan in which she deals with the general subject of the field of health, is found in Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 4 in an article beginning on page 120. This was published in the fall of 1864.

On page 124, we find this statement:

"God expressly commanded the children of Israel not to eat swine's flesh. ~~be~~ The heathens used this meat as an article of food. God prohibited the Hebrews the use of swine's flesh because it was hurtful. It would fill the system with humors, and in that warm climate often produced leprosey. Its influence upon the system in that climate was far more injurious than in a colder climate. But God never designed the swine to be eaten under any circumstances. Swine were useful. In a fruitful country, where there was much to decay upon the ground, which would poison the atmosphere, herds of swine were permitted to run free, and devoured the decaying substances, which was a means of preserving health. Other animals were forbidden to be eaten by the Israelites, because they were not the best articles of food."--Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 4, page 124.

This paragraph was amplified as Ellen White presented the subject of health reform more fully in the series of pamphlets entitled "Health, or How to Live." In 1865, she wrote the following statement:

"Pork, although one of the most common articles of diet, is one of the most injurious. God did not prohibit the Hebrews from eating swine's flesh merely to show His authority, but because it was not a proper article of food for man. It would fill the system

with scrofula, and especially in that warm climate produced leprosy, and disease of various kinds. Its influence upon the system in that climate was far more injurious than in a colder climate. But God never designed the swine to be eaten under any circumstances. The heathen used pork as an article of food, and American people have used pork freely as an important article of diet. Swine's flesh would not be palatable to the taste in its natural state. It is made agreeable to the appetite by high seasoning, which makes a very bad thing worse. Swine's flesh above all other flesh meats, produces a bad state of the blood. Those who eat freely of pork can but be diseased. Those who have much outdoor exercise do not realize the bad effects of pork eating, as those do whose life is mostly indoors, and whose habits are sedentary, and whose labor is mental.

"But it is not the physical health alone which is injured by pork eating. The mind is affected, and the finer sensibilities are blunted by the use of this gross article of food. It is impossible for the flesh of any living creatures to be healthy when filth is their natural element, and when they will feed upon every detestable thing. The flesh of swine is composed of what they eat. If human beings eat their flesh, their blood and their flesh will be corrupted by impurities conveyed to them through the swine.

"The eating of pork has produced scrofula, leprosy, and cancerous humors. Pork eating is still causing the most intense suffering to the human race."--Reprinted in Counsels on Diet and Foods, pp. 392-3.

Again in 1868, in Volume 2 of the Testimonies, on page 96, she wrote regarding the use of swine's flesh. The wording is:

"God has given you light and knowledge, which you have professed to believe came direct from Him, instructing you to deny appetite. You know that the use of swine's flesh is contrary to His express command, given not because He wished to especially show His authority, but because it would be injurious to those who should eat it. Its use would cause the blood to become impure, so that scrofula and other humors would corrupt the system, and the whole organism would suffer. Especially would the fine, sensitive nerves of the brain become enfeebled and so beclouded that sacred things would not be discerned, but be placed upon the low level with common things."--Testimonies, vol. 2, p. 96. Republished in Counsels on Diet and Foods, p. 392.

If you have further questions on this point, feel free to write to me concerning them. ALW