

Q+A 43-C-11

Apocrypha in "Word to the Little Flock."

Mrs White & use of flesh food
on family table

M

September 24, 1956

1288 G Street
Arcata, California

Dear Brother,

I was pleased to receive your letter this morning in which you ask several questions. The first relates to the Scripture and Apocrypha notes in the "Word to the 'Little Flock'" in connection with the publication of Sister White's first vision. This vision was first published in an article in the Day-Star in January, 1846. It was then reprinted in broadside form by James White and H. S. Guernsey in April, 1846, having been sent out from Portland, Maine. In these first two printings there are no Scriptural texts. On May 30, 1847, Elder James White brought his manuscript to completion for a series of articles on coming events, which he arranged to have published in the pamphlet, "A Word to the 'Little Flock.'" In the very heart of this he included a reprint of the E. G. White vision, and as he introduces this, on page 13 of "A Word to the 'Little Flock,'" he says:

"The following vision was published in the Day-Star more than a year ago. By the request of friends, it is republished in this little work, with scripture references, for the benefit of the little flock."

It is very apparent that the Scripture references and the reference to Esdras were added by James White. We cannot in any sense hold Ellen White responsible for these references.

I am sending with this letter a copy of "A Word to the 'Little Flock'" as reprinted. I would suggest that you observe the foreward which tells the story of the pamphlet, and then also Mrs. White's notes which you will find in the Appendix, beginning on page 25. On page 26 you will find in a statement prepared by the Trustees referring to the James White use of Apocrypha. We have no instance in the E. G. White writings where she quoted from the Apocrypha. Therefore, we cannot assume that she placed her approval upon it, or upon its use. We must remember that back in 1847 those we think of as pioneers were feeling their way along. James White was a young man, some 24 or 25 years of age, working quite separated from others who were later united with him

in the development of the work. The old Bibles in those days had the Apocrypha in them, and apparently James White observed some similarity in the description given by Ellen White of what was shown to her in her first vision and some things which were recorded in the book of Esdras.

Your second question relates to Ellen White's relationship to the use of flesh foods in her own personal experience. I will direct you to the Appendix of Counsels on Diets and Foods for a group of statements drawn from the E. G. White communications over a period of many years, which really tell the story of her personal attitude toward the vegetarian program. Her battle in this matter, you will find recorded on pages 483 and 484. It is a fact that the Whites were vegetarians long before they were teetotalers. There were times in her travels that she found it necessary to use some flesh foods to sustain strength. I think you would find this particularly so when she was in Europe. There was not so readily available back in the 1880's and 1890's the many foods that are to be found now in almost every part of the world.

It was in 1894 that she banished all flesh food from her table. I think that this does not indicate that flesh was a common article of diet up to this time, but over there in Australia it crept in on the table and was being used by some of her help. At any rate, the whole story is so clearly revealed in her own words in the Appendix to Counsels on Diets and Foods that it is hardly necessary for me to deal with it here. She did not use flesh food after 1895. There have been some rumors that in her very last illness she returned to the use of flesh food, but this is a falsification, and we have the witness of her own cooks upon this very point. Should that be desired, I can send it to you.

There is nothing in the E. G. White writings, or in any of her experiences, which would lead us to liberalize our position on the question of vegetarianism. I am very sorry to see the work taking place, however, which tends toward such liberalization.

I am glad you have written to us, Brother Becraft, and if we can help you in any further way, be sure to call upon us.

With the best of wishes, I am, dear brother,
Very sincerely your brother,
A. L. White, Secretary
ELLEN G. WHITE PUBLICATIONS

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Encl.