

## Introduction

“But the path of the just [is] as the shining light, that shineth more and more  
unto the perfect day.”

Proverbs 4:18

Although there are many and very good compilations of testimonies about very different topics, even about meat consumption, I have felt the need of studying the statements of the Spirit of Prophecy on this subject in chronological order, as they were published during the life of Sister White, so as to better understand the message that God sent His people through His servant regarding this topic.

In order to avoid the difficulty to have to decide whether to insert some manuscripts that appeared after 1915 according to the date in which they were first published or the date in which they were written, or in what order to put some manuscripts that have no specific date, this compilation includes only what she herself published before her death in 1915.

“And now to all who have a desire for truth I would say: Do not give credence to unauthenticated reports as to what Sister White has done or said or written. If you desire to know what the Lord has revealed through her, read her published works.”  
(*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, p. 696).

In spite of the fact that the decision mentioned above simplified the work, nevertheless it has been an extensive task, but the efforts have been greatly rewarded by the privilege to be able to observe the gradual, progressive, reasonable, coherent and harmonious way in which the message has come to us. In order to make the reading of this material easier, some explanations are given regarding the historical background of the statements. As much as possible, we have tried to avoid the repetition of the same message appearing in several publications and to include all main statements.

We ask God to bless every reader so that he may not only discern the Lord’s will on this matter, but also be motivated to study the divine revelations in depth and put into practice in his life the counsels that impress his mind.

A. Gabriel Cabrera R.

## **Development of the light presented by the Spirit of Prophecy Regarding the consumption of flesh meat**

### **THE MILERITES AND HEALTH**

From its beginning, the Adventist Movement had a position not only regarding spiritual health, but also regarding some aspects of physical health. The messages against the intake of alcoholic drinks were very clear. Brother William Miller made reference to the Temperance Societies with the following words: “These serve one purpose in trimming the lamps and preparing the way for the virgins to go out and meet the Bridegroom.” (*Millers Works*, pp. 246-247). His predictions were very successful. “In some of the large cities his work produced a marked impression. Liquor dealers abandoned the traffic and turned their shops into meeting rooms; gambling dens were broken up; infidels, deists, Universalists, and even the most abandoned profligates were reformed, some of whom had not entered a house of worship for years. Prayer meetings were established by the various denominations, in different quarters, at almost every hour, businessmen assembling at midday for prayer and praise.” (*The Great Controversy*, p. 331).

From those successful meetings attended by people from different denominations came out the pioneers of the advent movement. At the beginning, when the different churches saw the religious awakening caused by this message, they welcomed it, but as more and more people earnestly and fervently searched the Holy Scriptures placing them as the only norm of faith, those same churches, zealous of their tradition, progressively closed their doors and rejected the Adventist belief ever more powerfully to the point that they ridiculed it and expelled from their congregations, or obliged them to leave “voluntarily”, all those who would not abandon their hope in the soon coming of Jesus.

In this way, those who were zealous about the biblical truths gathered together and later on took the name Adventists.

After the memorable disappointment of October 22, 1844, the few faithful ones who stood the trials continued examining the Word of God in order to discover the mistake they had made in interpreting the prophecies and find out what other truths the Lord wanted to reveal them. Soon the Lord gave them light regarding the Sanctuary and its purification as well as the extensive work that expected them, according to what is stated in Revelation 10:11: “And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings”. In His mercy, God motivated the believers by means of visions given to a 17 years old girl, Sister Ellen G. Harmon, who later on married Brother White. Both of them, together with other pioneers who gathered in prayer and in the deep study of the Holy Scriptures, made disappear the different opinions rooted in the diversity of beliefs sustained by the different Christian churches the people came from and the popular traditions that they had accepted as true. In this way they elaborated a set of specific beliefs that made of the advent movement a peculiar people. Through visions, God confirmed many of the doctrines thus discovered.

The visions given by God were on a diversity of topics, from particular matter that affected a specific person to general issues such as the doctrines that affected the whole church.

At the beginning, the messenger of God was called to communicate these visions orally, thus giving testimony of what God had revealed her. Shortly after, she received instructions to write and publish the matters of general use as well as some counsels given to specific persons, which could also be beneficial to other people who were in a similar situation. The

Lord commanded her to proclaim these instructions widely. On other occasions, when the person involved did not give heed to the message, but put it aside and pretended to ignore it, Sister White included that message among the ones that were to be given to the people. In this way, since 1855, *Testimonies for the Church* started to be published. At the beginning they were just pamphlets of a few pages (the first one had only 16 pages), but when the original editions were sold out, they saw the need of reprinting them as a book. The first five volumes of the *Testimonies for the Church* were a compilation of the first 33 pamphlets. This explains why in the same volume there are testimonies published on different years.

On the area of health, the pioneers were not limited to the struggle against alcoholism. At a very early stage, about 1851, according to what brother James White said in 1871 in *The Health Reformer* in April of that year, this struggle included tobacco, tea and coffee.

### **SWINE FLESH IN THE DECADE OF 1850**

Notwithstanding, the consumption of meat was not a matter that called the attention of the pioneers at an early stage. They did not even seem to have any scruples regarding eating swine flesh. It was actually the different opinions concerning the use of this product as food what caused several polemics already at the beginning to the decade of 1850. In the November 1850 edition of the magazine *The Present Truth*, brother James White wrote an article about swine flesh showing his disapproval with those who proposed that the consumption of this kind of meat should be absolutely excluded from the diet of Sabbath-keepers. Such a matter did not seem to have great priority in the researches made by the pioneers. Even Sister White, in 1858, wrote the following reproach to a brother who in an unilateral way wanted to force others to abstain from swine flesh:

“I saw that your views concerning swine's flesh would prove no injury if you have them to yourselves; but in your judgment and opinion you have made this question a test, and your actions have plainly shown your faith in this matter. If God requires His people to abstain from swine's flesh, He will convict them on the matter. He is just as willing to show His honest children their duty, as to show their duty to individuals upon whom He has not laid the burden of His work. 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.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, pp. 206-207).

In the same testimonies, it is explained the way the Lord acts, His wish to keep unity in the ranks of the believers and His patience in giving opportunity to those who are sincere to understand and experience the advantages of the light imparted. God's priorities should also be ours.

“God is leading out a people, not a few separate individuals here and there, one believing this thing, another that. Angels of God are doing the work committed to their trust. The third angel is leading out and purifying a people, and they should move with him unitedly. Some run ahead of the angels that are leading this people; but they have to retrace every step, and meekly follow no faster than the angels lead. I saw that the angels of God would lead His people no faster than they could receive and act upon the important truths that are communicated to them.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, p. 207).

Apostle Paul was also inspired to use a similar method, according to the explanation in Acts of the Apostles, page 271:

“Paul had necessarily adapted his manner to teaching to the condition of the church. ‘I, brethren could not speak unto you as unto spiritual,’ he afterward explained to them, ‘but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.’ 1 Corinthians 3:1, 2. Many of the Corinthian believers had been slow to learn the lessons that he was endeavoring to teach them. Their advancement in spiritual knowledge had not been proportionate to their privileges and opportunities. When they should have been far advanced in Christian experience, and able to comprehend and to practice the deeper truths of the word, they were standing where the disciples stood when Christ said to them, ‘I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.’ John 16:12.” (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 271).

At the beginning of June 1863, America was in the middle of the terrible secession war and the Adventist people were not only affected by different diseases, but also concerned on how to help those brethren who were to pay 300 dollars commutation in order to avoid serving in the army. The discussions about the advantages and dangers of organizing the church were put aside. They had already finished the process of organizing local churches and field conferences in every state and at the end of May they had organized the General Conference. When the work had reached a certain degree of maturity and development, God communicated enough light to His people so that they could unitedly reflect more clearly Christ’s character. This time there was not only a confirmation of the truths being discussed, but also a broader revelation of the way set by the Lord for His beloved people so that He could make effective His promise in Exodus 15:26: “And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I [am] the LORD that healeth thee.”.

#### **FIRST VISION REGARDING HEALTH**

The first vision Sister White received regarding the health reform was on 6 June 1863 when she was in Otsego, Michigan. Then she was instructed about the harmfulness of meat consumption. During that vision she received clear counsels regarding health, beginning with God’s original plan on what man should eat and underlining the serious effects caused by a perverted appetite. She was shown the importance of good nourishment, the need of practicing temperance in all areas of life, the transcendental importance of hygiene, proper ventilation and moral purity as well as the serious effects of the use of drugs and of following the irrational rules dictated by fashion. Regarding meat, the testimonies that were published based on that vision, on the first place, refer to the harmfulness of the consumption of swine flesh and also the harm caused by the flesh of sick animals. In that vision alcoholic drinks as well as tobacco, tea and coffee were strongly condemned.

These advices were not immediately circulated in printed form. There were many things that kept Sister White busy and delayed the production of literature. It seems also that it took her some time to put into practice in her own life the counsels received before she could preach them to others, not only in written form but also with her example. Thus, it was only in the middle of **1864**, that a great part of those advices were published in her book *Spiritual Gifts*, volume 4, chapter 39, in 30 pages under the title *Health*. From that book we extract the following (pp. 121-147):

“When the Lord brought his people from Egyptian bondage, he led them through the wilderness to prove them, and try them. He promised to be their God, and to take them

to himself as his peculiar treasure. He did not prohibit their eating meat, but withheld it from them in a great measure. He gave them food which he designed that they should have, which was healthy, and of which they could eat freely. He rained their bread from Heaven, and gave them purest water out of the flinty rock. He made a covenant with them, that if they would obey him in all things, he would put no disease upon them. But the Israelites were not satisfied with the food which God gave them. They murmured against Moses and against God, and wished themselves back in Egypt, where they could sit by the flesh pots. God in his anger gave them flesh to gratify their lustful appetite, and great numbers of them died in the act of eating the meat for which they had lusted. While it was yet between their teeth the curse of God came upon them. God here teaches his people that he is displeased with their permitting their appetite to control them. The Israelites at times would prefer slavery, and even death, rather than to be deprived of meat. (4aSG 121.4) ...

“Intemperance in eating and in drinking, and the indulgence of base passions have benumbed the fine sensibilities, so that sacred things have been placed upon a level with common things. Nadab and Abihu drank too freely of wine, and the result was, they used common fire instead of sacred, and were destroyed for thus dishonoring God. When appetite is left to control reason, sacred things are not discerned. God expressly commanded the children of Israel not to eat swine's flesh. The heathen 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 leprosy. 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. (4aSG 124.1) ...

“There is a class who profess to believe the truth, who do not use tobacco, snuff, tea, or coffee, yet they are guilty of gratifying the appetite in a different manner. They crave highly-seasoned meats, with rich gravies, and their appetite has become so perverted that they cannot be satisfied with even meat, unless prepared in a manner most injurious. The stomach is fevered, the digestive organs are taxed, and yet the stomach labors hard to dispose of the load forced upon it. After the stomach has performed its task it becomes exhausted, which causes faintness. Here many are deceived, and think that it is the want of food which produces such feelings, and without giving the stomach time to rest, they take more food, which for the time removes the faintness. And the more the appetite is indulged, the more will be its clamors for gratification.(4aSG 129.1)  
...

“Persons who have indulged their appetite to eat freely of meat, highly-seasoned gravies, and various kinds of rich cakes and preserves, cannot immediately relish a plain, wholesome, and nutritious diet. Their taste is so perverted they have no appetite for a wholesome diet of fruits, plain bread and vegetables... {4aSG 130.3}

“Children who eat improperly are often feeble, pale and dwarfed, and are nervous, excitable and irritable. Everything noble is sacrificed to the appetite, and the animal passions predominate... (4aSG 132.2)

“Many die of disease caused wholly by meat-eating...” (4aSG 147.1).

### **THE LIGHT GROWS**

Short afterwards, at the beginning of **1865**, the topic of health was enlarged and presented in six articles called: *Sickness and its causes*, included in a series of six magazines called *How to live*. These magazines had also articles from other writers, that completed the subject dealt with and later on were published in a book with the same name. Whoever wants to read those articles from Sister White, can find them in the book *Selected Messages*, volume 2, pp. 412-420. The first one of those articles, among other things, refers to the harmful effect of using meat as nourishment. From page 412 and on from this book, we quote the following:

“The human family have been growing more and more self-indulgent, until health has been most successfully sacrificed upon the altar of lustful appetite.” (*Selected Messages*, volume 2, p. 412)

“The stomach, when we lie down to rest, should have its work all done, that it may enjoy rest, as well as other portions of the body... This faintness is generally the result of meat-eating, and eating frequently, and too much.” (*Selected Messages*, volume 2, p. 415)

“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.” (*Selected Messages*, volume 2, p. 417)

“There are but few animals that are free from disease...”

“Because those who partake of animal food do not immediately feel its effects, is no evidence it does not injure them. It may be doing its work surely upon the system, and yet the persons for the time being realize nothing of it.” (*Selected Messages*, volume 2, p. 418)

“Men and women, by indulging the appetite in eating rich and highly-seasoned foods, especially flesh-meats, with rich gravies, and by using stimulating drinks, as tea and coffee, create unnatural appetites. The system becomes fevered, the organs of digestion become injured, the mental faculties are beclouded, while the baser passions are excited, and predominate over the nobler faculties. The appetite becomes more unnatural, and more difficult of restraint. The circulation of the blood is not equalized, and becomes impure. The whole system is deranged, and the demands of appetite become more unreasonable, craving exciting, hurtful things, until it is thoroughly depraved.” (*Selected Messages*, volume 2, p. 420)

In spite of the difficulties that resulted from the secession war, which by then had taken alarming proportions, this information was distributed and studied by the majority of the Adventist people, who at the time were about 4.000 souls. Soon, many of them, with more or less ardour, tried to put into practice the counsels received and obtained results according to their faith and fervour. Some were greatly benefited as they acted consequently and they even made public their successful experience by writing letters or articles that were published in the *Review and Herald* of the time. Others, either because their comprehension was limited or

due to lack of perseverance and will power to restrain their appetite and break with old habits or for any other reason, manifested inconformity and lack of interest in the inspired counsels.

### **LIGHT FOR SPECIFIC CASES**

In the testimonies published after 1865, there are various messages addressed to different brothers or churches, admonishing them to accept the light regarding health reform and underlining the losses that those who neglected to put into practice these truths were suffering, both materially and spiritually.

The first one is a testimony published in **1867**, to be found in *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, page 485 and on. Here we are informed:

“In the vision given me in Rochester, New York, December 25, 1865, I was shown that our Sabbathkeeping people have been negligent in acting upon the light which God has given in regard to the health reform, that there is yet a great work before us, and that as a people we have been too backward to follow in God's opening providence as He has chosen to lead us. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, p. 485)

“I was shown that the work of health reform has scarcely been entered upon yet. While some feel deeply and act out their faith in the work, others remain indifferent and have scarcely taken the first step in reform. There seems to be in them a heart of unbelief, and, as this reform restricts the lustful appetite, many shrink back. They have other gods before the Lord. Their taste, their appetite, is their god; and when the ax is laid at the root of the tree and those who have indulged their depraved appetites at the expense of health are touched, their sin pointed out, their idols shown them, they do not wish to be convinced; and although God's voice should speak directly to them to put away those health-destroying indulgences, some would still cling to the hurtful things which they love. They seem joined to their idols, and God will soon say to His angels: Let them alone. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, p. 486)

“The health reform, I was shown, is a part of the third angel's message and is just as closely connected with it as are the arm and hand with the human body. I saw that we as a people must make an advance move in this great work. Ministers and people must act in concert. God's people are not prepared for the loud cry of the third angel.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, p. 486)

“I saw that our heavenly Father has bestowed upon us the great blessing of light upon the health reform that we may obey the claims which He has upon us and glorify Him in our bodies and spirits which are His and finally stand without fault before the throne of God. Our faith requires us to elevate the standard and take advance steps. While many question the course pursued by other health reformers, they as reasonable men should do something themselves. Our race is in a deplorable condition, suffering from disease of every description. Many have inherited disease and are great sufferers because of the wrong habits of their parents, and yet they pursue the same wrong course in regard to themselves and their children which was pursued toward them. They are ignorant in regard to themselves. They are sick and do not know that their own wrong habits are causing them immense suffering.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, p. 488)

“There are but few as yet who are aroused sufficiently to understand how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their characters, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, p. 488)

On page 548 of the same book we find the erroneous opinion that was spread among the people:

“Some think that they cannot reform, that health would be sacrificed should they attempt to leave the use of tea, tobacco, and flesh meats. This is the suggestion of Satan.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, p. 548)

From page 681, we copy:

“Many do not feel that this is a matter of duty, hence they do not try to prepare food properly. This can be done in a simple, healthful, and easy manner, without the use of lard, butter, or flesh meats. Skill must be united with simplicity.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, p. 681)

Since **1868** several testimonies appeared in order to balance the position taken by some believers. It is interesting to notice the terms, at first moderate, but later ever clearer, with which she advises to put aside flesh meat as nourishment. On page 45 of the second volume of *Testimonies for the Church*, we read:

“You are not to measure yourself by others. The word of God has presented you an unerring pattern, a faultless example... You need to practice temperance in all things. Here is a cross which you have shunned... A plain diet, free from spices and flesh meats and grease of all kinds, would prove a blessing to you ...” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 45)

On page 60 we are told:

“Your business is of a character that is not friendly to an advance in the divine life, but is one that will hinder the growth of grace and the knowledge of the truth. It has a tendency to lower, to debase the man, to make him more animal in his propensities. The higher powers of the mind are overpowered by the lower. The brutish part of your nature governs the spiritual. Those who profess to be fitting for translation should not become butchers. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 60)

“We are composed of what we eat, and if we subsist largely upon the flesh of dead animals we shall partake of their nature. You have encouraged the grosser part of your organism, while the more refined has been weakened. You have repeatedly said in defense of your indulgence of meat eating: ‘However injurious it may be to others, it does not injure me, for I have used it all my life.’ But you know not how well you might have been if you had abstained from the use of flesh meats. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 60)

“It is impossible for those who make free use of flesh meats to have an unclouded brain and an active intellect. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 62)

“After they have reduced their physical strength by a reduced quantity and a poor quality of food, some conclude that their former way of living is the best. The system



must be nourished. Yet we do not hesitate to say that flesh meat is not necessary for health or strength. If used it is because a depraved appetite craves it. Its use excites the animal propensities to increased activity and strengthens the animal passions. When the animal propensities are increased, the intellectual and moral powers are decreased. The use of the flesh of animals tends to cause a grossness of body and benumbs the fine sensibilities of the mind.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 63)

“Will the people who are preparing to become holy, pure, and refined, that they may be introduced into the society of heavenly angels, continue to take the life of God's creatures and subsist on their flesh and enjoy it as a luxury? From what the Lord has shown me, this order of things will be changed, and God's peculiar people will exercise temperance in all things. Those who subsist largely upon flesh cannot avoid eating the meat of animals which are to a greater or less degree diseased. The process of fitting animals for market produces in them disease; and fitted in as healthful manner as they can be, they become heated and diseased by driving before they reach the market. The fluids and flesh of these diseased animals are received directly into the blood, and pass into the circulation of the human body, becoming fluids and flesh of the same. Thus humors are introduced into the system. And if the person already has impure blood, it is greatly aggravated by the eating of the flesh of these animals. The liability to take disease is increased tenfold by meat eating.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 63)

From what was published in **1869**, we quote from page 352 of the same book the following:

“If ever there was a time when the diet should be of the most simple kind, it is now. Meat should not be placed before our children... Grains and fruits prepared free from grease, and in as natural a condition as possible, should be the food for the tables of all who claim to be preparing for translation to heaven.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 352)

In **1870**, the following statement appeared for the first time. We copy it from page 367 and on, from the same volume 2 of *Testimonies for the Church*:

“But what about an impoverished diet? I have spoken of the importance of the quantity and quality of food being in strict accordance with the laws of health. But we would not recommend an impoverished diet. I have been shown that many take a wrong view of the health reform and adopt too poor a diet.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 367)

“Flesh meats and rich food, and an impoverished diet, will produce the same results.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 368)

“Could we know that animals were in perfect health, I would recommend that people eat flesh meats sooner than large quantities of milk and sugar. It would not do the injury that milk and sugar do.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 368)

## PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Regarding the experience Sister White had while changing her diet, she tells us on pages 371-372, of the same book (volume 2):

“I have been a great sufferer from disease, having had five shocks of paralysis. I have been with my left arm bound to my side for months because the pain in my heart was so great. When making these changes in my diet, I refused to yield to taste and let that govern me. Shall that stand in the way of my securing greater strength, that I may therewith glorify my Lord? Shall that stand in my way for a moment? Never! I suffered keen hunger. I was a great meat eater. But when faint, I placed my arms across my stomach and said: ‘I will not taste a morsel. I will eat simple food, or I will not eat at all.’” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 371)

“I took my stand on health reform from principle. And since that time, brethren, you have not heard me advance an extreme view of health reform that I have had to take back. I have advanced nothing but what I stand to today. I recommend to you a healthful, nourishing diet.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 372)

“I do not regard it a great privation to discontinue the use of those things which leave a bad smell in the breath and a bad taste in the mouth. Is it self-denial to leave these things and get into a condition where everything is as sweet as honey; where no bad taste is left in the mouth and no feeling of goneness in the stomach?” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 372)

## **EXCEPTION**

Condemning the mistakes that some had made by not giving the right nourishment to their families and dealing specifically with the case of a sister who being pregnant did not get enough food or warm clothes from her husband, the testimony mentions some exceptions that should have been convenient to make, and among them she says on page 383:

“In some cases, even a small amount of the least hurtful meat would do less injury than to suffer strong cravings for it.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 383)

## **STRUGGLES**

To put into practice the health reform was a great struggle in the hearts of some Adventists. Not all of them were successful. On page 394, we are told:

“There has been a war in the hearts of some ever since the health reform was first introduced. They have felt the same rebellion as did the children of Israel when their appetites were restricted on their journey from Egypt to Canaan. Professed followers of Christ, who have all their lives consulted their own pleasure and their own interests, their own ease and their own appetites, are not prepared to change their course of action and live for the glory of God, imitating the self-sacrificing life of their unerring Pattern. A perfect example has been given for Christians to imitate. The words and works of Christ's followers are the channel through which the pure principles of truth and holiness are conveyed to the world. His followers are the salt of the earth, the light of the world.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 394).

## NEED OF SELF CONTROL

Further on, on pages 399 and 404, we are told regarding God's plan and the control we have to exert upon our appetite so that we may reach Christian perfection and partake of the divine nature. We quote:

“The Lord in wisdom designed to bring His people into a position where they would be separate from the world in spirit and practice, that their children might not so readily be led into idolatry and become tainted with the prevailing corruptions of this age. It is God's design that believing parents and their children should stand forth as living representatives of Christ, candidates for everlasting life. All who are partakers of the divine nature will escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. It is impossible for those who indulge the appetite to attain to Christian perfection. You cannot arouse the moral sensibilities of your children while you are not careful in the selection of their food... You should study to prepare a simple yet nutritious diet. Flesh meats, and rich cakes and pies prepared with spices of any kind, are not the most healthful and nourishing diet... Fruits and grains, prepared in the most simple form, are the most healthful, and will impart the greatest amount of nourishment to the body, and, at the same time, not impair the intellect. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 399).

Referring to the condition of many animals, we are told on page 404:

“The very animals whose flesh you eat are frequently so diseased that, if left alone, they would die of themselves; but while the breath of life is in them, they are killed and brought to market.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 404).

On page 412, she writes the following advice:

“My brother, you have much to learn. You indulge your appetite by eating more food than your system can convert into good blood. It is sin to be intemperate in the quantity of food eaten, even if the quality is unobjectionable. Many feel that, if they do not eat meat and the grosser articles of food, they may eat of simple food until they cannot well eat more. This is a mistake. Many professed health reformers are nothing less than gluttons.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 412).

From the same book, we quote the following:

“When Satan takes possession of the mind, how soon the light and instruction that the Lord has graciously given, fade away and have no force! How many frame excuses and make necessities which have no existence, to bear them up in their course of wrong in setting aside the light and trampling it underfoot! I speak with assurance. The greatest objection to health reform is that this people do not live it out; and yet they will gravely say they cannot live the health reform and preserve their strength. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 486).

“We find in every such instance a good reason why they cannot live out the health reform. They do not live it out, and have never followed it strictly, therefore they cannot be benefited by it. Some fall into the error that because they discard meat they have no need to supply its place with the best fruits and vegetables, prepared in their most natural state, free from grease and spices. If they would only skilfully arrange the bounties with which the Creator has surrounded them, parents and children with a clear

conscience unitedly engaging in the work, they would enjoy simple food, and would then be able to speak understandingly of health reform. Those who have not been converted to health reform, and have never fully adopted it, are not judges of its benefits. Those who digress occasionally to gratify the taste in eating a fattened turkey or other flesh meats, pervert their appetites, and are not the ones to judge of the benefits of the system of health reform. They are controlled by taste, not by principle.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 486).

#### **STUMBLING WHILE PRACTICING THE LIGHT**

But, having such clear and defined instructions, what hindered the people of God to put them into practice? What made more difficult the progress of the health reform? On page 487, we find:

“A wonderful indifference has been manifested upon this important subject by those right at the heart of the work. The lack of stability in regard to the principles of health reform is a true index of their character and their spiritual strength. They are deficient in thoroughness in their Christian experience. Conscience is not regarded. The basis or cause of every right action existing and operating in the renewed heart secures obedience without external or selfish motives. The spirit of truth and a good conscience are sufficient to inspire and regulate the motives and conduct of those who learn of Christ and are like Him. Those who have no strength of religious principle in themselves are easily swayed, by the example of others, in a wrong direction. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 487).

That same year, 1870, a pamphlet of 84 pages was published with the title *Appeal to the Battle Creek Church* with many important counsels for the church in the city where the headquarters of the General Conference was located. From page 75 to 77 in the same pamphlet, it says:

“In the fear of God I have given my testimony in regard to the health reform. It was more difficult to make headway upon this subject in B. C. among the Sabbath-keeping people, than in any other place. We battled on, and what have we gained? Pride of dress, pride of heart, love of show, love to gratify the appetite, have led to a disregard of the light the Lord permitted to shine upon them. They would not come to the light. They did not desire the light. Any light which would show them that if they would enjoy health they must deny the taste, was not acceptable.” {PH011 75.2}

“I do not speak of these as a whole. A few have been true to their principles. Some acknowledged the light, and, for a time, walked in it, but they were not steadfast. Is it possible that Christ's followers are unwilling to restrict their appetites to articles of food which are healthful? Some of those who have had the most light, those standing at the very head of the work, have not been true to the principles of health reform. As we have traveled we have seen men and women injuring their health by an improper diet. We have spoken to them kindly in regard to their duty, but we would be met: I thought you had decided you could not live without meat, butter, and cheese; for if I am rightly informed your people in B. C. eat flesh-meats. Your responsible men in the Office are not reformers. They eat meat, butter, cheese and rich pie and cake. Others will excuse their indulgence of appetite by referring to B. C. Said one, On such a celebration, the Institute tables were not set with food recommended in the Reformer. There was a great variety of food which I have known themselves to condemn, and I have seen your most

zealous church members, especially the females, looking over the table greedily for some article of food prepared richer than another. They seem to fear that they shall not obtain the most desirable position to obtain the very best dishes served up. We certainly saw their indulgence of appetite, which in us you condemn. {PH011 76.1}

### MERCIFUL PERSEVERANCE

Considering such disrespectful behaviour, it is amazing to see that God continued sending warnings regarding the health of His people. His mercy is such that in spite of the disobedience of the majority of them, the Lord increased the light by giving more revelations. Therefore, not long before, in **1872**, new testimonies appeared, which were compiled to form volume 3 of the *Testimonies for the Church*. On pages 21 and on from that book, we find:

“Above all things, we should not with our pens advocate positions that we do not put to a practical test in our own families, upon our own tables. This is dissimulation, a species of hypocrisy. .... We bear positive testimony against tobacco, spirituous liquors, snuff, tea, coffee, flesh meats, butter, spices, rich cakes, mince pies, a large amount of salt, and all exciting substances used as articles of food.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 3, p. 21).

“We may enjoy the fruits, the vegetables, the grains, without doing violence to the laws of our being. These articles, prepared in the most simple and natural manner, will nourish the body, and preserve its natural vigor without the use of flesh meats.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 3, p. 50).

“Children are allowed to eat flesh meats, spices, butter, cheese, pork, rich pastry, and condiments generally. ... Parents do not realize that they are sowing the seed which will bring forth disease and death.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 3, p. 136).

“The sickness that has visited many families in Battle Creek need not have been if they had followed the light God has given them. ... God cannot do great things for His people because of their hardness of heart and sinful unbelief.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 3, p. 171).

From what was published in **1875**, we quote the following two paragraphs, taken from pages 563 and 569, from the above-mentioned book (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 3):

“...Flesh meats constitute the principal article of food upon the tables of some families, until their blood is filled with cancerous and scrofulous humors. Their bodies are composed of what they eat. But when suffering and disease come upon them, it is considered an affliction of Providence.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 3, p. 363).

“Satan is corrupting minds and destroying souls through his subtle temptations. Will our people see and feel the sin of indulging perverted appetite? Will they discard tea, coffee, flesh meats, and all stimulating food, and devote the means expended for these hurtful indulgences to spreading the truth? ...” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 3, p. 569).

In the magazine *Signs of the Times* of 6 January **1876**, we are informed:

“Eating flesh-meat does not increase physical, mental, or moral health, but, on the contrary, frequently causes diseases of a very aggravating character...” {ST, January 6, 1876 par. 11 }

### **SUPPORT FOUND ON BIBLICAL STORIES**

Parallel to the direct counsels regarding the need of abstaining from flesh meat and other harmful nourishment, articles and testimonies appeared where some episodes in the Bible showed God’s displeasure when His children wanted to eat meat, as well as His blessing every time that His people were ready to deny appetite in order to please Him. Among themselves, the following stand out:

- The violence and perversion of the anti-diluvians as they killed animals to eat their meat even though in that time God had not given permission to eat flesh meat (*Signs of the Times* 27 February 1879),
- The miracle of giving them mana in the wilderness six days per week (*Signs of the Times* from 8 and 15 April 1880),
- The sinful desire of the Israelites who wanted to eat meat while the Lord had a better diet for them (*Signs of the Times* del 6 de enero de 1876),
- The virtue and success of Daniel and his companions in following a diet without meat and toxic substances (*Review and Herald*, 25 January 1881 y *Signs of the Times*, 11 February 1886).

In this way, the counsels regarding a diet free from flesh meat was reinforced by the instructions found in the Bible.

### **RESPONSIBILITY AS THE PEOPLE OF GOD**

In the magazine *Signs of the Times* from 17 February **1888**, Sister White wrote:

“If we are the servants of Christ, we must fight against the evils of this degenerate age. While lawlessness of all kinds is sweeping over our world like a flood, we must take a decided stand on the requirements of the Bible, or we shall be swept away into moral and physical ruin. We must have moral strength to place ourselves, with firm determination, in opposition to the iniquity that abounds, or we shall be overcome. It is our privilege to understand the laws of this wonderful structure, the human habitation, that God has given us. Mind and body should be preserved in the best possible state of health that we may take up our work in the world. I know that much can be done toward building up a good condition of health. I have had five shocks of paralysis, and God, in his mercy, has raised me up, to take my place in the work he has given me to do, and to try to benefit others by my experience. Light was given me, and I saw the reason for my feeble health. I was astonished that I had so long remained in ignorance in regard to the laws of life. My habits were out of harmony with the conditions that are necessary to health. ... but I had used flesh and spices, eating hearty meals three times a day. I had to educate myself to enjoy the simple, healthful grains and fruits that God has provided for the wants of man. But I found that all the sacrifice I had to make was doubly repaid in renewed health of body and mind.” {ST, February 17, 1888 par. 5 }

### **CORRECTION REGARDING THE INCORRECT APPLICATION OF THE LIGHT**

In 1890, a book called *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene* was published. It is a summary of the most important testimonies about health published until then. They were organized according to topics and some unpublished manuscripts were added to it. On pages 55 and 56 of that book, we are shown that the way in which the testimonies were accepted or rejected determined the formation of different groups of people within the ranks of the Adventists. It says:

“Two classes have been presented before me: first, those who are not living up to the light which God has given them; secondly, those who are too rigid in carrying out their one-sided ideas of reform, and enforcing them on others. When they take a position, they stand to it stubbornly, and carry nearly everything over the mark. (*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 56)

“When those who advocate hygienic reform carry the matter to extremes, people are not to blame if they become disgusted. Too often our religious faith is thus brought into disrepute, and in many cases those who witness such exhibitions of inconsistency can never afterward be brought to think that there is anything good in the reform. These extremists do more harm in a few months than they can undo in a life-time. They are engaged in a work which Satan loves to see go on...” (*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 55)

“The first class adopted the reform because some one else did. They did not obtain a clear understanding of its principles for themselves. Many of those who profess the truth have received it because some one else did, and for their life they could not give the reason of their faith. This is why they are so unstable. Instead of weighing their motives in the light of eternity, instead of obtaining a practical knowledge of the principles underlying all their actions, instead of digging down to the bottom, and building upon a right foundation for themselves, they are walking in the light of another's torch, and will surely fail.” (*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 56)

“The other class take wrong views of the reform. They adopt too meager a diet. They subsist upon a poor quality of food, prepared without reference to the nourishment of the system. It is important that food be prepared with care, so that the appetite, when not perverted, can relish it.” (*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 56)

It is also worthwhile to mention the additional counsels that appeared for the first time on pages 48, 117, 118 and 119 in the book *Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*:

“It is not the chief end of man to gratify his appetite. ... (*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 48)

“... Where plenty of good milk and fruit can be obtained, there is rarely any excuse for eating animal food; it is not necessary to take the life of any of God's creatures to supply our ordinary needs. In certain cases of illness or exhaustion it may be thought best to use some meat, but great care should be taken to secure the flesh of healthy animals. It has come to be a very serious question whether it is safe to use flesh-food at all in this age of the world. It would be better never to eat meat than to use the flesh of animals that are not healthy. When I could not obtain the food I needed, I have sometimes eaten a little meat; but I am becoming more and more afraid of it.” (*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 117)

“Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat-eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. We should ever keep this end in view, and endeavor to work steadily toward it. I cannot think that in the practice of flesh-eating we are in harmony with the light which God has been pleased to give us. All who are connected with our health institutions especially should be educating themselves to subsist on fruits, grains, and vegetables. If we move from principle in these things, if we as Christian reformers educate our own taste, and bring our diet to God's plan, then we may exert an influence upon others in this matter, which will be pleasing to God.” (*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 119)

## MESSAGES FROM AUSTRALIA

On 12 November **1891** sister White took a trip to Australia, a country where she lived for nine years. During that period, specially dedicated to literary work and education, the new ordinances regarding flesh meat were very limited. Among them we want to quote what appeared in the *General Conference Daily Bulletin* on January 30, **1893**, where we are warned:

“... Those who persist in the use of tea, coffee, and flesh meats will feel the need of drugs, but many might recover without one grain of medicine if they would obey the laws of health. Drugs need seldom to be used.” {GCDB, January 30, 1893 par. 2}

The following paragraphs that appeared in the *Youth's Instructor* of 31 May **1894** are also worth mentioning:

“... Some honestly think that a proper dietary consists chiefly of porridge. To eat largely of porridge would not insure health to the digestive organs; for it is too much like liquid. Encourage the eating of fruit and vegetables and bread. A meat diet is not the most wholesome of diets, and yet I would take the position that meat should not be discarded by every one. Those who have feeble digestive organs can often use meat, when they cannot eat vegetables, fruit, or porridge. If we would preserve the best health, we should avoid eating vegetables and fruit at the same meal.” (*Youth's Instructor*, May 31, 1894 par. 7)

“... The more largely flesh composes the diet of teachers and pupils, the less susceptible will be the mind to comprehend spiritual things.” (*Youth's Instructor*, May 31, 1894 par. 8)

The thirty second Assembly of the General conference was summoned on February **1897** at Lincoln, Nebraska, U.S.A., and although sister White was not able to attend because of the great distance, on January 11 of that same year she was moved to write a special warning regarding health, which she sent by mail and was read at the Assembly by brother J. H. Kellogg, on Thursday February 18. The following words are part of that warning:

“The meat diet is the serious question. Shall human beings subsist on the flesh of dead animals? The answer, from the light that God has given, is, No; decidedly no.” {GCDB, March 2, 1897 par. 9}

“All nature makes manifest the work of God. Man is fearfully and wonderfully made, and if man had obeyed the laws of Jehovah in his natural laws, the image of God would have been revealed in him. But by sinning against his own body; by indulging his



natural appetite and disturbing the action of the human machinery; by the use of alcoholic drinks, narcotics, and the flesh of diseased animals, man has distorted and crippled the Lord's divine arrangements.” {GCDB, March 2, 1897 par. 19}

“O, if every one could discern these matters as they have been presented to me, those who are so careless, so indifferent in regard to their character-building; those who plead for indulgence in a flesh-meat diet, would never open their lips in justification of an appetite for the flesh of dead animals...” {GCDB, March 2, 1897 par. 22}

In **1898** there appeared a compilation of testimonies under the title *Healthful Living*, both of those that were previously published as well as the manuscripts that had not yet been published. They included the following statements that were a novelty regarding meat:

“A religious life can be more successfully gained and maintained if flesh meats are discarded; for a meat diet stimulates into intense activity lustful propensities, and enfeebles the spiritual and moral nature.--U. T., Nov. 5, 1896.” (*Healthful Living*, p. 41)

“The proper cooking of food is a most essential requirement, especially where meat is not made an article of diet. Something must be prepared to take the place of meat, and these foods must be well prepared, so that meat will not be desired.--U. T., Dec. 20, 1896.” (*Healthful Living*, p. 76)

“Let no meat be found at our restaurants or dining tents, but let its place be supplied with fruits, grains, and vegetables. We must practise what we preach....-- U. T., March, 1896.” (*Healthful Living*, p. 97)

“The diet of animals is vegetables and grains. Must the vegetables be animalized, must they be incorporated into the system of an animal, before we get them? Must we obtain our vegetable diet by eating the flesh of dead creatures? God provided food in its natural state for our first parents. He gave Adam charge of the garden, to dress it and to care for it, saying, ‘To you it shall be for meat.’ One animal was not to destroy another animal for food.-- U. T., Nov. 5, 1896.” (*Healthful Living*, p. 97).

“Meat is the most expensive diet that can be had.-- U. T., Feb. 17, 1884.” (*Healthful Living*, p. 98)

“Disease of every type is afflicting the human family, and it is largely the result of subsisting on the diseased flesh of dead animals.--U. T., March, 1896.” (*Healthful Living*, p. 102).

“The fact that meat is largely diseased should lead us to make strenuous efforts to discontinue its use entirely. . . . It will be hard for some to do this, as hard as for the rum drinker to forsake his dram; but they will be better for the change.--U. T., Nov. 9, 1896.” (*Healthful Living*, p. 105)

During a conference given in Australia by Sister White on July 22, **1899** with the title *The School and Its Work*, she was asked about the relation of the school and health food stores. Her answer began:

“The light given me is that it will not be very long before we shall have to give up using any animal food. Even milk will have to be discarded. Disease is accumulating rapidly.

The curse of God is upon the earth, because man has cursed it. The habits and practices of men have brought the earth into such a condition that some other food than animal food must be substituted for the human family. We do not need flesh food at all. God can give us something else.” {AUCR, July 28, 1899 par. 15}

#### **PRACTICE MUST ACCOMPANY THEORY**

At the beginning of **1901**, short after Sister White came back from Australia, volume 6 of *Testimonies for the Church* was published. We quote two paragraphs from page 112 of that book:

“The large gatherings of our people afford an excellent opportunity of illustrating the principles of health reform. Some years ago at these gatherings much was said in regard to health reform and the benefits of a vegetarian diet; but at the same time flesh meats were furnished at the tables in the dining tent, and various unhealthful articles of food were sold at the provision stand. Faith without work is dead; and the instruction upon health reform, denied by practice, did not make the deepest impression.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 6, p. 112)

“As we near the close of time we must rise higher and still higher upon the question of health reform and Christian temperance, presenting it in a more positive and decided manner. We must strive continually to educate the people, not only by our words, but by our practice. Precept and practice combined have a telling influence.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 6, p. 112)

On 12 April 1901, in one of the many participations of sister White during the delegates’ sessions of the General Conference of that year, she expressed the following:

“In the light given me so long ago, I was shown that intemperance would prevail in the world to an alarming extent, and that everyone of the people of God must take an elevated stand in regard to reformation in habits and practices. At that time I was eating meat two or three times a day, and I was fainting away two or three times a day. The Lord presented a general plan before me. I was shown that God would give to his commandment-keeping people a reform diet, and that as they received this, their disease and suffering would be greatly lessened. I was shown that this work would progress.” {GCB, April 12, 1901 par. 4}

Two days after, following the report about the progress obtained in reducing the debts of the schools by means of the sale of the book *Christ’s Object Lessons*, Sister White spoke and read the testimony found in volume 6, pages 468 to 477, inserting some additional explanations among which the following are worth noticing:

“It will not hurt the students to deny appetite, and live on a simple diet of fruits and grains. This will help them. It will strengthen and bless them. It is a meat diet, and a great variety of food, which is ruining the digestive organs. None of our schools are to indulge in these harmful things...

“God wants the perceptive faculties of his people to be clear and capable of hard work. But if you are living on a flesh diet, you need not expect that your mind will be fruitful. The thoughts must be cleansed; then the blessing of God will rest upon his people. We want the pervading truth of God’s word to get hold of every one of our people before

this Conference is over. We want them to understand that the flesh of animals is not the proper food for them to eat. Such a diet cultivates the animal passions in them and in their children... {*The General Conference Bulletin*, April 14, 1901 par. 51}

#### **LAMENTABLE CONDITION OF ANIMALS**

The *Pacific Union Recorder* on its issue of 7 November 1901 published a testimony written on 26 July 1898 that, among other things, said:

“I present the Word of the Lord God of Israel, because of transgression the curse of God has come upon the earth itself, upon the cattle, and upon all flesh. Human beings are suffering the results of their own course of action in departing from the commandments of God. The beasts also suffer under the curse. Disease in cattle is making meat-eating a dangerous matter. The Lord's curse is upon the earth, upon man, upon beasts, upon the fish, and as transgression becomes almost universal, the curse will be permitted to become as broad and as deep as the transgression. Disease is contracted by the use of meat. The diseased flesh of these dead carcasses is sold in the market-places, and disease among men is the sure result. The Lord would bring His people into a position where they will not touch or taste the flesh of dead animals. There is no safety in eating of the flesh of dead animals, and in a short time the milk of the cows will also be excluded from the diet of God's commandment-keeping people. In a short time it will not be safe to use anything that comes from the animal creation.”--Unpublished Testimony, July 26, 1898. {PUR, November 7, 1901 par. 1}

#### **REPROACH TO THOSE WHO STILL ATE MEAT**

In the *Review and Herald* of 7 January **1902**, we read:

“... Who of us are eating meat today? Who have thought that they must live upon the flesh of dead animals? We should not do it. We are composed of what we eat. God has given you those things that will make you healthy. Do not put corpses upon your tables; do not, I beg of you, eat the flesh of dead animals; for there is enough that you can live upon without that.” {RH, January 7, 1902 par. 6}

“What does meat-eating do? -- It creates animalism in the human agent, it strengthens the animal propensities, which are already strong enough. You would better be strengthening the spiritual powers. God helps us that we may, by self-denial and self-sacrifice, keep a clear brain and an understanding mind.

On the issue of the same magazine of 27 May of the same year, we are given the solemn warning:

“Greater reforms should be seen among the people who claim to be looking for the soon appearing of Christ. Health reform is to do among our people a work which it has not yet done. There are those who ought to be awake to the danger of meat eating, who are still eating the flesh of animals, thus endangering the physical, mental, and spiritual health. Many who are now only half converted on the question of meat eating will go from God's people, to walk no more with them.” {RH, May 27, 1902 par. 2}

“ If while proclaiming the most solemn and important message God has ever given, men war against the truth by indulging wrong habits of eating and drinking, they take all the force from the message they bear.” {RH, May 27, 1902 par. 3}

“Those who indulge in meat eating, tea drinking, and gluttony are sowing seeds for a harvest of pain and death. The unhealthful food placed in the stomach strengthens the appetites that war against the soul, developing the lower propensities. A diet of flesh meat tends to develop animalism. A development of animalism lessens spirituality, rendering the mind incapable of understanding truth.” {RH, May 27, 1902 par. 4}

#### **GOD IS DISHONORED WHEN WE EAT MEAT**

From the magazine *Bible Training School* of 1 July 1902, we quote:

“Keep the work of health reform to the front, is the message I am given to bear. Show so plainly the value of health reform that a widespread need for it will be felt. But never advocate a starvation diet. It is possible to have a wholesome, nutritious diet without using flesh-meat. Think of placing the flesh of animals on our tables. Abstinence from all hurtful food and drink is the fruit of true religion.” (*Bible Training School*, July 1, 1902 par. 1)

“At this stage of the earth's history meat-eating is dishonoring to God. It is meat-eating and liquor-drinking that are making the world as it was in the days of Noah.” (*Bible Training School*, July 1, 1902 par. 3)

#### **THOSE WHO USED MEAT ARE CALLED PROFESSED BELIEVERS**

On the issue of 9 October 1902 of the *Pacific Union Recorder*, we are warned:

“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” All are now being tested and proved. Many to whom precious light has been given desire to return to the fleshpots of Egypt. Many who are supported by the tithe from God's storehouse are by self-indulgence poisoning the life-giving current flowing through their veins. Disregarding the light and the warnings that God has given during the past twenty-five or thirty years, some continue to gratify their desire for flesh-meat”. {PUR, October 9, 1902 par. 8}

“We are not to make the use of flesh-meat a test. But we may and should consider the influence that professed believers who use flesh-meat have over other churches. Those who use flesh-meat disregard all the warnings that God has given concerning this question. They have no evidence that they are walking in safe paths. They have not the slightest excuse for eating the flesh of dead animals. God's curse is resting upon the animal creation. Many times when meat is eaten it decays in the stomach, and creates disease. Cancers, tumors, and pulmonary diseases are largely caused by meat-eating.” {PUR, October 9, 1902 par. 9}

“As God's messengers shall we not bear a decided testimony against the indulgence of perverted appetite? Will those who claim to be ministers of the gospel, proclaiming the most solemn truth ever given to mortals, make the stomach a cesspool? God has provided an abundance of fruits and grains, which may be healthfully prepared and used in proper quantities. Why, then, do men continue to choose flesh-meats? Can we possibly have confidence in ministers who at tables where flesh is served join with others in eating it?” {PUR, October 9, 1902 par. 10}

## SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEALTH INSTITUTIONS

On December 1902 the 7th volume of the Testimonies was published. From that book we quote the following paragraphs with new statements about meat:

“We are not building sanitariums for hotels. Receive into our sanitariums only those who desire to conform to right principles, those who will accept the foods that we can conscientiously place before them. Should we allow patients to have intoxicating liquor in their rooms, or should we serve them with meat, we could not give them the help they should receive in coming to our sanitariums. We must let it be known that from principle we exclude such articles from our sanitariums and our hygienic restaurants. Do we not desire to see our fellow beings freed from disease and infirmity, and in the enjoyment of health and strength? Then let us be as true to principle as the needle to the pole.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 7, p. 95).

“There are many minds in many places to whom the Lord will surely give knowledge of how to prepare foods that are healthful and palatable, if He sees that they will use this knowledge righteously. Animals are becoming more and more diseased, and it will not be long until animal food will be discarded by many besides Seventh-day Adventists. Foods that are healthful and life-sustaining are to be prepared, so that men and women will not need to eat meat (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 7, p. 124).

“The Lord will teach many in all parts of the world to combine fruits, grains, and vegetables into foods that will sustain life and will not bring disease. Those who have never seen the recipes for making the health foods now on the market will work intelligently, experimenting with the food productions of the earth, and will be given light regarding the use of these productions. The Lord will show them what to do. He who gives skill and understanding to His people in one part of the world will give skill and understanding to His people in other parts of the world. It is His design that the food treasures of each country shall be so prepared that they can be used in the countries for which they are suited. As God gave manna from heaven to sustain the children of Israel, so He will now give His people in different places skill and wisdom to use the productions of these countries in preparing foods to take the place of meat. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 7, p. 124).

“Great care should be exercised by those who prepare recipes for our health journals. Some of the specially prepared foods now being made can be improved, and our plans regarding their use will have to be modified. Some have used the nut preparations too freely. Many have written to me: ‘I cannot use the nut foods; what shall I use in the place of meat?’ One night I seemed to be standing before a company of people, telling them that nuts are used too freely in their preparation of foods; that the system cannot take care of them when used as in some of the recipes given; and that, if used more sparingly, the results would be more satisfactory.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 7, p. 126).

“Some, after adopting a vegetarian diet, return to the use of flesh meat. This is foolish indeed and reveals a lack of knowledge of how to provide proper food in the place of meat.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 7, p. 126).

“It is the Lord's design that in every place men and women shall be encouraged to develop their talents by preparing healthful foods from the natural products of their own section of the country. If they look to God, exercising their skill and ingenuity under the guidance of His Spirit, they will learn how to prepare natural products into healthful foods. Thus they will be able to teach the poor how to provide themselves with foods that will take the place of flesh meat. Those thus helped can in turn instruct others. Such a work will yet be done with consecrated zeal and energy. If it had been done before, there would today be many more people in the truth and many more who could give instruction. Let us learn what our duty is, and then do it. We are not to be dependent and helpless, waiting for others to do the work that God has committed to us.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 7, p. 133).

“Concerning flesh meat, we should educate the people to let it alone. Its use is contrary to the best development of the physical, mental, and moral powers. And we should bear a clear testimony against the use of tea and coffee. It is also well to discard rich desserts. Milk, eggs, and butter should not be classed with flesh meat. In some cases the use of eggs is beneficial. The time has not come to say that the use of milk and eggs should be wholly discarded. There are poor families whose diet consists largely of bread and milk. They have little fruit and cannot afford to purchase the nut foods. In teaching health reform, as in all other gospel work, we are to meet the people where they are. Until we can teach them how to prepare health reform foods that are palatable, nourishing, and yet inexpensive, we are not at liberty to present the most advanced propositions regarding health reform diet.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 7, p. 134).

#### **REASONS OF INDIGESTION**

In **1903** the book *Education* was published. On page 203, it says:

“Tea and coffee, condiments, confectionery, and pastries are all active causes of indigestion. Flesh food also is harmful. Its naturally stimulating effect should be a sufficient argument against its use; and the almost universally diseased condition of animals makes it doubly objectionable. It tends to irritate the nerves and to excite the passions, thus giving the balance of power to the lower propensities.” (*Education*, p. 203).

#### **SUMMARY OF THE MESSAGES IMPARTED**

*The Ministry of Healing* was the following book regarding health and it came to the hands of our brethren in August **1905**. There, we can find many of the counsels given before. We quote the following paragraph of page 306 and the whole chapter “Flesh as Food” to be found on pages 311 to 317. In these quotations are summarized all the reasons why the use of meat as nourishment should be put aside.

“Many who discard flesh meats and other gross and injurious articles think that because their food is simple and wholesome they may indulge appetite without restraint, and they eat to excess, sometimes to gluttony. This is an error. The digestive organs should not be burdened with a quantity or quality of food which it will tax the system to appropriate.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 306).

“The diet appointed man in the beginning did not include animal food. Not till after the Flood, when every green thing on the earth had been destroyed, did man receive permission to eat flesh.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 311).

“In choosing man's food in Eden, the Lord showed what was the best diet; in the choice made for Israel He taught the same lesson. He brought the Israelites out of Egypt and undertook their training, that they might be a people for His own possession. Through them He desired to bless and teach the world. He provided them with the food best adapted for this purpose, not flesh, but manna, ‘the bread of heaven.’ It was only because of their discontent and their murmuring for the fleshpots of Egypt that animal food was granted them, and this only for a short time. Its use brought disease and death to thousands. Yet the restriction to a non-flesh diet was never heartily accepted. It continued to be the cause of discontent and murmuring, open or secret, and it was not made permanent.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 311).

“Upon their settlement in Canaan, the Israelites were permitted the use of animal food, but under careful restrictions which tended to lessen the evil results. The use of swine's flesh was prohibited, as also of other animals and of birds and fish whose flesh was pronounced unclean. Of the meats permitted, the eating of the fat and the blood was strictly forbidden.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p.311)

“Only such animals could be used for food as were in good condition. No creature that was torn, that had died of itself, or from which the blood had not been carefully drained, could be used as food.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p.312).

“By departing from the plan divinely appointed for their diet, the Israelites suffered great loss. They desired a flesh diet, and they reaped its results. They did not reach God's ideal of character or fulfil His purpose. The Lord ‘gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.’ Psalm 106:15. They valued the earthly above the spiritual, and the sacred pre-eminence, which was His purpose for them they did not attain.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p.312)

“Those who eat flesh are but eating grains and vegetables at second hand; for the animal receives from these things the nutrition that produces growth. The life that was in the grains and vegetables passes into the eater. We receive it by eating the flesh of the animal. How much better to get it direct, by eating the food that God provided for our use!” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 313).

“Flesh was never the best food; but its use is now doubly objectionable, since disease in animals is so rapidly increasing. Those who use flesh foods little know what they are eating. Often if they could see the animals when living and know the quality of the meat they eat, they would turn from it with loathing. People are continually eating flesh that is filled with tuberculous and cancerous germs. Tuberculosis, cancer, and other fatal diseases are thus communicated.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 313).

“The tissues of the swine swarm with parasites. Of the swine God said, ‘It is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcass.’ Deuteronomy 14:8. This command was given because swine's flesh is unfit for food. Swine are scavengers, and this is the only use they were intended to serve. Never, under any circumstances, was their flesh to be eaten by human beings. It is impossible for the flesh

of any living creature to be wholesome when filth is its natural element and when it feeds upon every detestable thing.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p.313)

“Often animals are taken to market and sold for food when they are so diseased that their owners fear to keep them longer. And some of the processes of fattening them for market produce disease. Shut away from the light and pure air, breathing the atmosphere of filthy stables, perhaps fattening on decaying food, the entire body soon becomes contaminated with foul matter.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p.314)

“Animals are often transported long distances and subjected to great suffering in reaching a market. Taken from the green pastures, and traveling for weary miles over the hot, dusty roads, or crowded into filthy cars, feverish and exhausted, often for many hours deprived of food and water, the poor creatures are driven to their death, that human beings may feast on the carcasses.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 314)

“In many places fish become so contaminated by the filth on which they feed as to be a cause of disease. This is especially the case where the fish come in contact with the sewage of large cities. The fish that are fed on the contents of the drains may pass into distant waters and may be caught where the water is pure and fresh. Thus when used as food they bring disease and death on those who do not suspect the danger. (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 314)

“The effects of a flesh diet may not be immediately realized; but this is no evidence that it is not harmful. Few can be made to believe that it is the meat they have eaten which has poisoned their blood and caused their suffering. Many die of diseases wholly due to meat eating, while the real cause is not suspected by themselves or by others.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 315)

“The moral evils of a flesh diet are not less marked than are the physical ills. Flesh food is injurious to health, and whatever affects the body has a corresponding effect on the mind and the soul. Think of the cruelty to animals that meat eating involves, and its effect on those who inflict and those who behold it. How it destroys the tenderness with which we should regard these creatures of God!” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 315)

“The intelligence displayed by many dumb animals approaches so closely to human intelligence that it is a mystery. The animals see and hear and love and fear and suffer. They use their organs far more faithfully than many human beings use theirs. They manifest sympathy and tenderness toward their companions in suffering. Many animals show an affection for those who have charge of them, far superior to the affection shown by some of the human race. They form attachments for man which are not broken without great suffering to them.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 315)

“What man with a human heart, who has ever cared for domestic animals, could look into their eyes, so full of confidence and affection, and willingly give them over to the butcher's knife? How could he devour their flesh as a sweet morsel?” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p.316)

“It is a mistake to suppose that muscular strength depends on the use of animal food. The needs of the system can be better supplied, and more vigorous health can be enjoyed, without its use. The grains, with fruits, nuts, and vegetables, contain all the nutritive properties necessary to make good blood. These elements are not so well or so



fully supplied by a flesh diet. Had the use of flesh been essential to health and strength, animal food would have been included in the diet appointed man in the beginning.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 316)

“When the use of flesh food is discontinued, there is often a sense of weakness, a lack of vigor. Many urge this as evidence that flesh food is essential; but it is because foods of this class are stimulating, because they fever the blood and excite the nerves, that they are so missed. Some will find it as difficult to leave off flesh eating as it is for the drunkard to give up his dram; but they will be the better for the change.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 316)

“When flesh food is discarded, its place should be supplied with a variety of grains, nuts, vegetables, and fruits that will be both nourishing and appetizing. This is especially necessary in the case of those who are weak or who are taxed with continuous labor. In some countries where poverty abounds, flesh is the cheapest food. Under these circumstances the change will be made with greater difficulty; but it can be effected. We should, however, consider the situation of the people and the power of lifelong habit, and should be careful not to urge even right ideas unduly. None should be urged to make the change abruptly. The place of meat should be supplied with wholesome foods that are inexpensive. In this matter very much depends on the cook. With care and skill, dishes may be prepared that will be both nutritious and appetizing, and will, to a great degree, take the place of flesh food.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p.316)

“In all cases educate the conscience, enlist the will, supply good, wholesome food, and the change will be readily made, and the demand for flesh will soon cease.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 317).

“Is it not time that all should aim to dispense with flesh foods? How can those who are seeking to become pure, refined, and holy, that they may have the companionship of heavenly angels, continue to use as food anything that has so harmful an effect on soul and body? How can they take the life of God's creatures that they may consume the flesh as a luxury? Let them, rather, return to the wholesome and delicious food given to man in the beginning, and themselves practice, and teach their children to practice, mercy toward the dumb creatures that God has made and has placed under our dominion.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 317).

#### **EXCEPTIONS THAT CONFIRM THE RULE**

In the *Pacific Health Journal* of 1 September of the same year, 1905, we are instructed about the exceptional cases in which the flesh meat from healthy animals could be used:

“Yet it might not be best to discard flesh food under all circumstances. In certain cases of illness and exhaustion -- as when persons are dying of tuberculosis, or when incurable tumors are wasting the life forces -- it may be thought best to use flesh food in small quantities. But great care should be taken to secure the flesh of healthy animals. The danger of contracting disease by eating flesh is increasing. It is a very serious question whether there is safety in using animal food at all. It would be better to discard it under all circumstances than to use that which is diseased.” {PHJ, September 1, 1905 par. 14}

## FINAL TESTIMONY

In September **1909**, the last volume of *Testimonies for the Church* was published - volume 9. The fourth from the eight parts that form the book is about *The Health Work* and the first testimony of that section, which goes from page 153 to 164, was read on 31 May 1909 before the delegates at the Assembly of the General Conference in Washington. The first part of that testimony is an extract of a letter written to Br. A. G. Daniells, the president of the General Conference the previous year and transformed to be generally applied. Some details, which Sister White considered it was better not to make public at the time were eliminated. It is practically the last fervent and general call to put in practice the advices that had been repeated so many times about temperance and vegetarianism and that are now expressed in a more emphatic way. Considering their importance, we see it convenient to quote a good part of that testimony in the following paragraphs:

“I am instructed to bear a message to all our people on the subject of health reform, for many have backslidden from their former loyalty to health reform principles. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 153)

“Those who have received instruction regarding the evils of the use of flesh foods, tea and coffee, and rich and unhealthful food preparations, and who are determined to make a covenant with God by sacrifice, will not continue to indulge their appetite for food that they know to be unhealthful. God demands that the appetites be cleansed, and that self-denial be practiced in regard to those things which are not good. This is a work that will have to be done before His people can stand before Him a perfected people.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 153)

“There are some professed believers who accept certain portions of the Testimonies as the message of God, while they reject those portions that condemn their favorite indulgences. Such persons are working contrary to their own welfare and the welfare of the church. It is essential that we walk in the light while we have the light. Those who claim to believe in health reform, and yet work counter to its principles in the daily life practice, are hurting their own souls and are leaving wrong impressions upon the minds of believers and unbelievers.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 154)

“God requires of His people continual advancement. We need to learn that indulged appetite is the greatest hindrance to mental improvement and soul sanctification. With all our profession of health reform, many of us eat improperly. Indulgence of appetite is the greatest cause of physical and mental debility, and lies largely at the foundation of feebleness and premature death. Let the individual who is seeking to possess purity of spirit bear in mind that in Christ there is power to control the appetite.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 156)

“If we could be benefited by indulging the desire for flesh foods, I would not make this appeal to you; but I know we cannot. Flesh foods are injurious to the physical well-being, and we should learn to do without them. Those who are in a position where it is possible to secure a vegetarian diet, but who choose to follow their own preferences in this matter, eating and drinking as they please, will gradually grow careless of the instruction the Lord has given regarding other phases of the present truth and will lose their perception of what is truth; they will surely reap as they have sown.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 156)

“I have been instructed that the students in our schools are not to be served with flesh foods or with food preparations that are known to be unhealthful. Nothing that will serve to encourage a desire for stimulants should be placed on the tables. I appeal to old and young and to middle-aged. Deny your appetite of those things that are doing you injury. Serve the Lord by sacrifice.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 157)

“I am instructed to say to parents: Place yourselves, soul and spirit, on the Lord's side of this question. We need ever to bear in mind that in these days of probation we are on trial before the Lord of the universe. Will you not give up indulgences that are doing you injury? Words of profession are cheap; let your acts of self-denial testify that you will be obedient to the demands that God makes of His peculiar people. Then put into the treasury a portion of the means you save by your acts of self-denial, and there will be that with which to carry on the work of God.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 157)

“There are many who feel that they cannot get along without flesh food; but if these would place themselves on the Lord's side, resolutely resolved to walk in the way of His guidance, they would receive strength and wisdom as did Daniel and his fellows. They would find that the Lord would give them sound judgment. Many would be surprised to see how much could be saved for the cause of God by acts of self-denial. The small sums saved by deeds of sacrifice will do more for the upbuilding of the cause of God than larger gifts will accomplish that have not called for denial of self.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 157)

“Seventh-day Adventists are handling momentous truths. More than forty years ago the Lord gave us special light on health reform, but how are we walking in that light? How many have refused to live in harmony with the counsels of God! As a people, we should make advancement proportionate to the light received. It is our duty to understand and respect the principles of health reform. On the subject of temperance we should be in advance of all other people; and yet there are among us well-instructed members of the church, and even ministers of the gospel, who have little respect for the light that God has given upon this subject. They eat as they please and work as they please.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 158)

“I have been shown that the principles that were given us in the early days of the message are as important and should be regarded just as conscientiously today as they were then. There are some who have never followed the light given on the question of diet. It is now time to take the light from under the bushel and let it shine forth in clear, bright rays. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 158)

“The principles of healthful living mean a great deal to us individually and as a people. When the message of health reform first came to me, I was weak and feeble, subject to frequent fainting spells. I was pleading with God for help, and He opened before me the great subject of health reform. He instructed me that those who are keeping His commandments must be brought into sacred relation to Himself, and that by temperance in eating and drinking they must keep mind and body in the most favorable condition for service. This light has been a great blessing to me. I took my stand as a health reformer, knowing that the Lord would strengthen me. I have better health today, notwithstanding my age, than I had in my younger days.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 158)

“It is reported by some that I have not followed the principles of health reform as I have advocated them with my pen; but I can say that I have been a faithful health reformer. Those who have been members of my family know that this is true.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 159)

“We do not mark out any precise line to be followed in diet; but we do say that in countries where there are fruits, grains, and nuts in abundance, flesh food is not the right food for God's people. I have been instructed that flesh food has a tendency to animalize the nature, to rob men and women of that love and sympathy which they should feel for everyone, and to give the lower passions control over the higher powers of the being. If meat eating was ever healthful, it is not safe now. Cancers, tumors, and pulmonary diseases are largely caused by meat eating.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 159)

“We are not to make the use of flesh food a test of fellowship, but we should consider the influence that professed believers who use flesh foods have over others. As God's messengers, shall we not say to the people: ‘Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God’? 1 Corinthians 10:31. Shall we not bear a decided testimony against the indulgence of perverted appetite? Will any who are ministers of the gospel, proclaiming the most solemn truth ever given to mortals, set an example in returning to the fleshpots of Egypt? Will those who are supported by the tithe from God's storehouse permit themselves by self-indulgence to poison the life-giving current flowing through their veins? Will they disregard the light and warnings that God has given them? The health of the body is to be regarded as essential for growth in grace and the acquirement of an even temper. If the stomach is not properly cared for, the formation of an upright, moral character will be hindered. The brain and nerves are in sympathy with the stomach. Erroneous eating and drinking result in erroneous thinking and acting.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 159)

“All are now being tested and proved. We have been baptized into Christ, and if we will act our part by separating from everything that would drag us down and make us what we ought not to be, there will be given us strength to grow up into Christ, who is our living head, and we shall see the salvation of God.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 160)

“Only when we are intelligent in regard to the principles of healthful living can we be fully aroused to see the evils resulting from improper diet. Those who, after seeing their mistakes, have courage to change their habits, will find that the reformatory process requires a struggle and much perseverance; but when correct tastes are once formed, they will realize that the use of the food which they formerly regarded as harmless was slowly but surely laying the foundation for dyspepsia and other diseases.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 160)

“Greater efforts should be put forth to educate the people in the principles of health reform. Cooking schools should be established, and house-to-house instruction should be given in the art of cooking wholesome food. Old and young should learn how to cook more simply. Wherever the truth is presented, the people are to be taught how to prepare food in a simple, yet appetizing way. They are to be shown that a nourishing diet can be provided without the use of flesh foods.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 161)

“Some, in abstaining from milk, eggs, and butter, have failed to supply the system with proper nourishment, and as a consequence have become weak and unable to work. Thus health reform is brought into disrepute. The work that we have tried to build up solidly is confused with strange things that God has not required, and the energies of the church are crippled. But God will interfere to prevent the results of these too strenuous ideas. The gospel is to harmonize the sinful race. It is to bring the rich and poor together at the feet of Jesus.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 162)

“Those ministers who feel at liberty to indulge the appetite are falling far short of the mark. God wants them to be health reformers. He wants them to live up to the light that has been given on this subject. I feel sad when I see those who ought to be zealous for our health principles, not yet converted to the right way of living. I pray that the Lord may impress their minds that they are meeting with great loss. If things were as they should be in the households that make up our churches, we might do double work for the Lord.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 163)

“If, after so much light has been given, God's people will cherish wrong habits, indulging self and refusing to reform, they will suffer the sure consequences of transgression. If they are determined to gratify perverted appetite at any cost, God will not miraculously save them from the consequences of their indulgence. They ‘shall lie down in sorrow.’ Isaiah 50:11.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 164)

“Those who choose to be presumptuous, saying, ‘The Lord has healed me, and I need not restrict my diet; I can eat and drink as I please,’ will ere long need, in body and soul, the restoring power of God. Because the Lord has graciously healed you, you must not think you can link yourselves up with the self-indulgent practices of the world. Do as Christ commanded after His work of healing—‘go, and sin no more.’ John 8:11. Appetite must not be your god.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 164)

## THE LAST BOOK

The last book of sister White published before her death was in **1913** with the title *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*. Parts of that book are quotations taken from other books, but part is material that had not been published until then. From this latter we find the following regarding the topic we are dealing with:

“The need of carefulness in habits of diet should be impressed on the minds of all students. I have been instructed that those attending our schools are not to be served with flesh foods or with preparations of food that are known to be unwholesome. Nothing that will serve to encourage a desire for stimulants should be placed on the table. I appeal to all to refuse to eat those things that will injure the health. Thus they can serve the Lord by sacrifice.” (*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 298)

“Both young men and young women should be taught how to cook economically, and to dispense with everything in the line of flesh food. Let no encouragement be given to the

preparation of dishes which are composed in any degree of flesh food; for this is pointing to the darkness and ignorance of Egypt, rather than to the purity of health reform.” *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 313)

#### **CONSIDERATION OF SOME ARGUMENTS THAT BELIEVERS WHO ARE IN FAVOUR OF A FLEXIBLE AND PERMISSIVE VEGETARIANISM PRESENT**

A conscientious examination of the statements of the Spirit of Prophecy as they were quoted before, that is to say as they were made available to believers, will show every reader who is free of prejudice that the light was given in a gradual and progressive way. Every time there was a stronger rejection of flesh meat as nourishment for the children of God, being that our Creator’s plan is that His children completely abandon the consumption of meat.

Nevertheless, there are some who pay attention to special statements which are either recommendations regarding other topic or exceptions to the general rule, but that instead of annulling it, they sustain it. We herewith present a list with the main quotations on that regard:

Statements that present or seem to present exceptions regarding the prohibition of eating flesh meat:

- (1) 1870 “Could we know that animals were in perfect health, I would recommend that people eat flesh meats sooner than large quantities of milk and sugar. It would not do the injury that milk and sugar do.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 368).
- (2) 1870 “In some cases, even a small amount of the least hurtful meat would do less injury than to suffer strong cravings for it.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 383).
- (3) 1890 “In certain cases of illness or exhaustion it may be thought best to use some meat, but great care should be taken to secure the flesh of healthy animals.” (*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, pág. 117).
- (4) 1894 “A meat diet is not the most wholesome of diets, and yet I would take the position that meat should not be discarded by every one. Those who have feeble digestive organs can often use meat, when they cannot eat vegetables, fruit, or porridge.” (*Youth’s Instructor*, 31 May 1894).
- (5) 1902 “We are not to make the use of flesh-meat a test. But we may and should consider the influence that professed believers who use flesh-meat have over other churches.” (*Pacific Union Recorder*, 9 October 1902).
- (6) 1905 “Yet it might not be best to discard flesh food under all circumstances. In certain cases of illness and exhaustion -- as when persons are dying of tuberculosis, or when incurable tumors are wasting the life forces -- it may be thought best to use flesh food in small quantities. But great care should be taken to secure the flesh of healthy animals.” (*Pacific Health Journal*, 1 September 1905).

- (7) 1909 “We are not to make the use of flesh food a test of fellowship, but we should consider the influence that professed believers who use flesh foods have over others.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, pág. 160).

Considerations regarding the meaning of these 7 quotations:

- (1) The first one of these quotations is not really a recommendation to eat meat, but to discontinue the use of great quantities of milk and sugar. It is a comparison of something bad with something worse in order to show how harmful is what is mentioned last. Such comparisons appear frequently in the Testimonies regarding different topics. To make things more clear we quote an extreme case presented in *Testimonies about Sexual Behaviour, Adultery and Divorce*, page 127, that says: “If I were forced to choose whether these children should be exposed to these temptations, educated in these evil practices, or be cut down by death, I would say, Let them die in their innocence.” It is impossible to understand from this statement that Sister White would recommend the death of some girls.
- (2) This second quotation is also a comparison and shows us how harmful it is to have unsatisfied desires, specially when these increase due to an insufficient quantity of healthful nourishment. The true recommendation is not to give in to the desire of the flesh, but to learn to prepare healthy food according to the following advice: “Something must be prepared to take the place of meat, and these foods must be well prepared, so that meat will not be desired.--U. T., Dec. 20, 1896.” (*Healthful Living*, pág. 76-77).
- (3) Here it is acknowledge the need of an exception in the case of certain illnesses. This idea is extended in quotations 4 and 6.
- (4) The health reform was given us, as one can deduce from its name, with the purpose that we may have better health. If a person has such a sick digestive tract that he “cannot eat vegetables, fruit, or porridge”, but can digest flesh meat, then before letting him die of starvation it is better to give him the meat of healthy animals until his system will recover and he will be able to digest a more healthy diet.
- (5) These quotations instead of favouring the consumption of flesh meat, say that the believers who, in spite of being aware of the inspired counsels, continue using flesh meat are professed believers, that is to say not real believers and urge us to consider the influence exerted by them. The paragraph immediately before, gives us an idea of the difficulties that would have arisen if they would have attempted “to make the use of flesh-meat a test,” because not only many lay members were not prepared to pass that test, but even some ministers were eating flesh meat. “Many to whom precious light has been given desire to return to the fleshpots of Egypt. Many who are supported by the tithe from God's storehouse are by self-indulgence poisoning the life-giving current flowing through their veins. Disregarding the light and the warnings that God has given during the past twenty-five or thirty years, some continue to gratify their desire for flesh-meat.”

The general line of this testimony is not to reduce the importance of the issue of flesh meat, but on the contrary, since it says that to continue eating is equal to “disregarding the light and the warnings that God has given”. Such a scornful attitude separates us from the ranks of the true believers and we become simple professed believers.

Certainly, if many of those who were paid from the tithes were in such a condition it was not wise to try to make of the matter of meat a test.

Some people interpret this quotations: “We are not to make the use of flesh-meat a test” as a prohibition to God’s church to make of the matter of putting flesh meat aside a requirement for believers. Others, on the other hand, think it is not a prohibition, but an explanation that given the circumstances at the time, was not wise to try to establish as a test something that many workers and lay members were not practicing. In order to understand this as a prohibition, this statement should be accompanied by additional explanations giving reasons that make understand this sudden change of idea, but such explanation cannot be found in this testimony.

The understanding of this statement as an explanation is sustained by the general tenor expressed in the testimony itself where that assertion is found, as well as by all testimonies regarding the topic of flesh meat consumption. Without any doubt, the most appropriate clarification is the one the author herself gives in manuscript 23 from 1911, published in 1985 on page 10 of *The Paulson Collection of Ellen G. White Letters*, where referring to this subject she says: “I am not prepared to advise that we make the matter of meat eating a test question with our people. There are some things on this subject that I can write out to be read before the churches, which it is essential for believers to understand; but when it comes to making this a test question, I dare not place it before the people in that positive way. There are those who would stumble over such a presentation, and there are others who would make of it a stone of stumbling. {PC 10.5}

“Let us give this matter due consideration. I am prepared to stand for some things; but not yet are we as a people fully ready for this issue.” Here we are shown that in 1911 the conditions were not “yet” given to put such a test, which would be badly used. That “yet” gives us hope that in the future the people would be prepared for that matter.

Besides, the promise we are given in the *Pacific Union Recorder* of 7 November 1901: “The Lord would bring His people into a position where they will not touch or taste the flesh of dead animals.” shows us God’s ideal for His people.

It is convenient to remind those who would rather put aside this test the warning found in the *Review and Herald* from 27 May 1902: “Many who are now only half converted on the question of meat eating will go from God's people, to walk no more with them.” {RH, May 27, 1902 par. 2}.

- (6) Here are clearly specified the cases in which it is indispensable to provide small quantities of meat. Specific examples are given: “when persons are dying of tuberculosis, or when incurable tumors are wasting the life forces” “But great care should be taken to secure the flesh of healthy animals.”.
- (7) This testimony is very similar to the one quoted under number 5 and the comments given for that quotation are also valid here. In addition, it is important to consider the explanations presented by Arthur L. White on chapter 16 of volume 6 of his biography of Ellen G. de White, *The Later Elmshaven Years*, page 199 and following, about the precedents of this testimony. This was not only the manuscript that sister White read on 31 May 1909 before the Assembly of the General Conference in Washington, but it was originally part of a letter written on 29 March 1908 to Br. A. Daniells, president of the General Conference, that was published, with little changes



in a pamphlet with the title *Backsliding in Health Reform*. Such a letter is also available in *Spalding and Magan Collection*, pages 426 to 430. From the parts of the letter that are not in the testimony published in volume 9 considered here, it is specially significant the plea presented by the Lord's servant asking the President of the General Conference to circulate among the officers and employees of the General Conference headquarters a call to practice the health reform and abandon flesh meat consumption. It runs as follows: "Serve the Lord by sacrifice. Let the good work begin at Washington, and go forth from there to other places. I know whereof I am writing. If a temperance pledge providing for the abstinence from flesh foods, tea, and coffee, and some other foods that are known to be injurious, were circulated through our ranks, a great and good work would be accomplished. I ask you at this time, will you not circulate such a pledge?" {SpM 428.4}

"I am sure if you will begin in Washington to do this work of reform--in the school, in the printing office, and among all our working forces,-- the Lord will help you to present a pledge that will help our people to return from their backsliding on the question of health reform." {SpM 429.1}

Here is expressed a wonderful plan to promote faithfulness to the health reform not by presenting it as an obligation, but by speaking to the conscience of all co-workers so as to help them to take the right decision. In this way, the leading brethren could have exerted a good influence and by means of the good example make the churches understand the importance of practicing health reform. If this plan had been put into practice, at a certain point could vegetarianism have been made a condition to belong to the church. Unfortunately, this plan was not accepted by Br. Daniells and without having the voluntary cooperation of the president of the General Conference, Sister White did not insist in a pledge, but limited her warnings to the delegates of the World Assembly of 1909, to which is published in volume 9 of *Testimonies for the Church*.

It is interesting that the Lord led the pioneers of the Reform Movement to incorporate this point in the Principles of Faith in 1925 and in this way the purpose expressed in that letter dated 29 March 1908 was carried out. God always has ways to fulfil His purpose.

#### FINAL LIST

We should like to finish with a list that shows the progressive development of the most important statements against the use of flesh meat as nourishment:

- 1864 "He did not prohibit their eating meat, but withheld it from them in a great measure." (*Spiritual Gifts*, volume 4, p. 122).
- 1864 "God expressly commanded the children of Israel not to eat swine's flesh." (*Spiritual Gifts*, volume, p. 124).
- 1864 "Many die of disease caused wholly by meat-eating." (*Spiritual Gifts*, volume 4, p. 147).
- 1865 "Those who eat freely of pork can but be diseased." (*Selected Messages*, volume 2, p. 417).
- 1865 "Men and women, by indulging the appetite in eating rich and highly-seasoned foods, especially flesh-meats, with rich gravies, and by using stimulating drinks, as tea and coffee, create unnatural appetites." (*Selected Messages*, volume 2, p. 420).

- 1867 “Some think that they cannot reform, that health would be sacrificed should they attempt to leave the use of tea, tobacco, and flesh meats. This is the suggestion of Satan.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, p. 548).
- 1868 “We are composed of what we eat, and if we subsist largely upon the flesh of dead animals we shall partake of their nature.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 60)
- 1868 “It is impossible for those who make free use of flesh meats to have an unclouded brain and an active intellect.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 62).
- 1868 “Yet we do not hesitate to say that flesh meat is not necessary for health or strength. If used it is because a depraved appetite craves it. Its use excites the animal propensities to increased activity and strengthens the animal passions.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 63).
- 1868 “Will the people who are preparing to become holy, pure, and refined, that they may be introduced into the society of heavenly angels, continue to take the life of God's creatures and subsist on their flesh and enjoy it as a luxury? From what the Lord has shown me, this order of things will be changed, and God's peculiar people will exercise temperance in all things.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 63).
- 1868 “Those who subsist largely upon flesh cannot avoid eating the meat of animals which are to a greater or less degree diseased. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 63).
- 1868 “The liability to take disease is increased tenfold by meat eating. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 63).
- 1869 “Meat should not be placed before our children.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 352).
- 1870 “The very animals whose flesh you eat are frequently so diseased that, if left alone, they would die of themselves; but while the breath of life is in them, they are killed and brought to market.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2, p. 404).
- 1872 “Children are allowed to eat flesh meats, spices, butter, cheese, pork, rich pastry, and condiments generally. ... Parents do not realize that they are sowing the seed which will bring forth disease and death. (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 3, p. 136).
- 1876 “Eating flesh-meat does not increase physical, mental, or moral health, but, on the contrary, frequently causes diseases of a very aggravating character... {ST, January 6, 1876 par. 11 }
- 1890 “Where plenty of good milk and fruit can be obtained, there is rarely any excuse for eating animal food; it is not necessary to take the life of any of God's creatures to supply our ordinary needs.” (*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 117).
- 1890 “Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat-eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet.” (*Christian Temperance and Bible Hygiene*, p. 119).
- 1894 “The more largely flesh composes the diet of teachers and pupils, the less susceptible will be the mind to comprehend spiritual things.” (*Youth's Instructor*, 31 May 1894).
- 1897 “The meat diet is the serious question. Shall human beings subsist on the flesh of dead animals? The answer, from the light that God has given, is, No; decidedly no.” (*General Conference Daily Bulletin*, 2 March 1897).

- 1897 “...by the use of alcoholic drinks, narcotics, and the flesh of diseased animals, man has distorted and crippled the Lord's divine arrangements.” (*General Conference Daily Bulletin*, 2 March 1897).
- 1898 “A religious life can be more successfully gained and maintained if flesh meats are discarded; for a meat diet stimulates into intense activity lustful propensities, and enfeebles the spiritual and moral nature.” (*Healthful Living*, p. 41).
- 1898 “Meat is the most expensive diet that can be had.” (*Healthful Living*, pág. 98).
- 1898 “Disease of every type is afflicting the human family, and it is largely the result of subsisting on the diseased flesh of dead animals.” (*Healthful Living*, p. 102).
- 1898 “The fact that meat is largely diseased should lead us to make strenuous efforts to discontinue its use entirely.” (*Healthful Living*, p. 105).
- 1901 “It is a meat diet, and a great variety of food, which is ruining the digestive organs.” (*General Conference Bulletin*, 14 April 1901).
- 1901 “We want them to understand that the flesh of animals is not the proper food for them to eat.” (*General Conference Bulletin*, 14 April 1901).
- 1901 “Disease is contracted by the use of meat. The diseased flesh of these dead carcasses is sold in the market-places, and disease among men is the sure result. The Lord would bring His people into a position where they will not touch or taste the flesh of dead animals.” (*Pacific Union Recorder*, 7 November 1901).
- 1902 “Who of us are eating meat today? Who have thought that they must live upon the flesh of dead animals? We should not do it... Do not put corpses upon your tables; do not, I beg of you, eat the flesh of dead animals; for there is enough that you can live upon without that.” (*Review and Herald*, 7 January 1902).
- 1902 “There are those who ought to be awake to the danger of meat eating, who are still eating the flesh of animals, thus endangering the physical, mental, and spiritual health. Many who are now only half converted on the question of meat eating will go from God's people, to walk no more with them.” (*Review and Herald*, 27 May 1902).
- 1902 “A diet of flesh meat tends to develop animalism. A development of animalism lessens spirituality, rendering the mind incapable of understanding truth.” (*Review and Herald*, 27 May 1902).
- 1902 “At this stage of the earth's history meat-eating is dishonoring to God.” (*Bible Training School*, 1 July 1902).
- 1902 “Those who use flesh-meat disregard all the warnings that God has given concerning this question... They have not the slightest excuse for eating the flesh of dead animals.” (*Pacific Union Recorder*, 9 October 1902).
- 1902 “Will those who claim to be ministers of the gospel, proclaiming the most solemn truth ever given to mortals, make the stomach a cesspool?” (*Pacific Union Recorder*, 9 October 1902).
- 1902 “Some, after adopting a vegetarian diet, return to the use of flesh meat. This is foolish indeed.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 7, p. 126).
- 1902 “Concerning flesh meat, we should educate the people to let it alone. Its use is contrary to the best development of the physical, mental, and moral powers.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 7, p. 134).
- 1903 “Flesh food also is harmful.” (*Education*, p. 203).
- 1905 “Flesh was never the best food; but its use is now doubly objectionable, since disease in animals is so rapidly increasing.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 241).

- 1905 “Many die of diseases wholly due to meat eating, while the real cause is not suspected by themselves or by others.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 241).
- 1905 “The moral evils of a flesh diet are not less marked than are the physical ills. Flesh food is injurious to health, and whatever affects the body has a corresponding effect on the mind and the soul.” (*The Ministry of Healing*, pp. 242-243).
- 1905 “Is it not time that all should aim to dispense with flesh foods? How can those who are seeking to become pure, refined, and holy, that they may have the companionship of heavenly angels, continue to use as food anything that has so harmful an effect on soul and body?” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 244).
- 1909 “If we could be benefited by indulging the desire for flesh foods, I would not make this appeal to you; but I know we cannot. Flesh foods are injurious to the physical well-being, and we should learn to do without them.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 156).
- 1909 “...flesh food is not the right food for God's people. I have been instructed that flesh food has a tendency to animalize the nature, to rob men and women of that love and sympathy which they should feel for everyone, and to give the lower passions control over the higher powers of the being. If meat eating was ever healthful, it is not safe now.” (*Testimonies for the Church*, volume 9, p. 156).