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THE WORD OF WISDOM.

A DEMONSTRATED WAY TO HEALTH, LONG LIFE AND HAPPINESS.

THIS simple, effective method of maintaining good health and prolonging life has been tested nearly one hundred years by a group of people now numbering approximately three quarters of a million persons.

The death rate of this Word of Wisdom group is less than one-half that of civilized countries; the immunity from the ravaging diseases of mankind is astonishingly great, and the mental, moral and economic conditions are far above the average.

Such a convincing demonstration of the value of a health system is unique among the many suggested guides to better health and longer life.

POSITIVE TEACHINGS OF THE WORD OF WISDOM.

The Word of Wisdom is concerned largely with the nature of the food and drink taken into the body.

1. **THE MODERATE USE OF MEAT.** The flesh of animals should be used sparingly, chiefly in cold weather.

2. **THE LIBERAL USE OF FRUIT.** Fruits of all kinds, especially fresh fruits, should be a regular part of the human dietary.

3. **THE REGULAR USE OF VEGETABLES.** All the recognized edible vegetables, leafy, root and tuber, should be eaten daily. The leafy vegetables and some of the others should be eaten in their fresh state.

4. **THE BASIC USE OF GRAINS.** The daily dietary should include as its basis, properly prepared grains. The whole wheat kernel should be ground for bread or porridge. Refined flour should be avoided; whole meal used. All grains are good foods, but wheat is best for the use of man. Other seeds and nuts also form valuable foods.

5. **HEALTH-GIVING BEVERAGES.** Pure, fresh water should be drunk freely, at arising and between meals throughout the day. Milk, fruit juices and grain extracts, notably of bran and barley, should supplement the intake of pure water in supplying the body with the necessary liquid.

6. **PROPER PERIODS OF SLEEP.** The body should be invigorated by regular, preferably early sleep, ending in early morning.

7. **HABITS OF REGULAR WORK AND PLAY.** Health requires regular and steady physical labour and intellectual effort.

8. **A CORRECT MENTAL ATTITUDE.** Faith, hope, charity, and a constant seeking after the truth of life and the universe with a determination to accept it when found, form the foundation blocks for good health. A sound religious philosophy is a prerequisite for perfect health.

NEGATIVE TEACHINGS OF THE WORD OF WISDOM.

Injurious drink and food must be avoided. That is quite as important as to eat good foods.

1. **ABSTINENCE FROM ALL ALCOHOLIC DRINKS.** Beer, wines and stronger drinks should be eliminated, completely, from human use. The proper physiological use of alcohol is for the washing of the body in disease.

2. **ABSTINENCE FROM THE USE OF TOBACCO.** In no form and at no time of life should tobacco be used. Tobacco has its proper place in medicine and among the destructive poisons.

3. **ABSTINENCE FROM THE USE OF TEA, COFFEE AND SIMILAR SUBSTANCES.** All drinks containing substances that are unnaturally stimulating should be eliminated from the human dietary.

4. **AVOIDANCE OF REFINED FOODS.** Refined foods have been robbed of many of the elements most needed by the body.

THE CRAVING FOR UNDESIRABLE FOOD OR DRINK MAY BE OVERCOME. The desire for the things enumerated in the negative teachings of the Word of Wisdom is unnatural, resulting from non-conformity with the positive teachings. If the Word of Wisdom be practised in full, the craving for alcohol, tobacco and other stimulants will disappear.

SCIENTIFIC CONFIRMATION OF THE WORD OF WISDOM.

The recent great advance of science has shown the correctness of the teachings of the Word of Wisdom.

Physical health is chiefly a matter of blood chemistry. Whole grains, vegetables and fruits supply the necessary mineral and other substances necessary to maintain a proper blood reaction.

Vitamins enable the body to effect the physiological transformations necessary for good health, and must be present in every complete dietary. Word of Wisdom foods provide all the essential and necessary vitamins. The various fruits contain vitamin C; vegetables and milk products, vitamins A, C and D; and grains, nuts and other edible seeds, vitamin B.

Alcohol has been shown to be a physiological poison; the deadly poison nicotine has been found in tobacco; and coffee and tea contain the injurious substances caffeine (thein) and tannic acid.

A mind at peace has been shown to favour physical well-being.

The Word of Wisdom is everywhere in full accord with the latest findings of science.

PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF THE WORD OF WISDOM.

Reliable vital statistics of the group of people, the Latter-day Saints, practising the Word of Wisdom, compared with those of the leading nations, as furnished by the latest health year-book of the League of Nations, demonstrate the health-giving power of the system. The average birth rate of twenty-five of these nations was 22 per thousand of population; of the Latter-day Saints, 30 per thousand, or nearly one-third greater, implying sound health. The average death rate of the nations was 14 per thousand; of the Latter-day Saints 7.5 per thousand, or about one-half as great, implying increasing length of life. The net difference between the birth rate and death rate of the nations was 8 per thousand; of the Latter-day Saints 23 per thousand, or nearly three times as great. The effect of the Word of Wisdom is clearly evident.

Detailed health statistics are also given by the International Health Year-book. The averages of six nations—Germany, France, Netherlands, Sweden, Great Britain, and U.S.A.—may be compared with the corresponding data of the Latter-day Saints.

Deaths per 100,000 from the following diseases (in 1926, 1927):

	Six Nations	Latter-day Saints.
Tuberculosis	120	9
Cancer	119	47
Diseases of the Nervous System	123	52
Diseases of the Circulatory System	196	115

Diseases of the Respiratory System	167	105
Diseases of the Digestive System	73	56
Kidney and Kindred Diseases (Nephritis)	44	23
Maternity (per 1000 births)	45	10

The Word of Wisdom has produced a people eminent in health and longevity, and apparently with increased immunity from the diseases that scourge the earth.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF THE WORD OF WISDOM.

Adherence to the Word of Wisdom reduces the cost of living—the main economic problem of our day — by the larger use of the less expensive foods, such as grains and vegetables, and by saving the huge sums expended elsewhere for harmful alcoholic beverages, tobacco, tea and coffee.

There are few very wealthy people among the Latter-day Saints. There is also little poverty among them. Their average prosperity is high. Three-fourths of the Latter-day Saints own the homes in which they live. Such a prosperous economic condition has resulted from industry and thrift (77% of the people are engaged in productive occupations), coupled with the power and savings incident to obeying the Word of Wisdom.

MENTAL PROFICIENCY FROM THE WORD OF WISDOM.

A close relationship exists between the mind and body. Physical health permits full mental activity. This is borne out by the history of the Latter-day Saints.

Literacy among the Word of Wisdom group is about 99.7%; about 60 Latter-day Saints in every thousand attend high school—more than three times the average for the United States; about 9 Latter-day Saints in a thousand attend universities — nearly twice the United States average. The rates for literacy and attendance at high schools and universities are probably the highest in the world for a group of like size. This high mental development is reflected in a remarkably large proportion of men and women of recognized leadership in the world.

Insanity is low among the Latter-day Saints — about one-half of the average of the people among whom they live.

MORAL EFFECTS OF THE WORD OF WISDOM.

A high morality would be expected from people with healthy bodies and developed minds.

The marriage rate among the Latter-day Saints is 14.5 per thousand, compared with 8 per thousand for twenty nations listed by the League of Nations in its latest Health Year-book. Divorces number 14 per hundred thousand as compared with 46 per hundred thousand for fifteen nations. The rate of illegitimacy among the Latter-day Saints is correspondingly low, 8.7 of every thousand births (in the State of Utah) as compared with 74 in every thousand for an average of twenty-two civilized nations listed by the League of Nations. The criminal record of the Latter-day Saints points similarly to a high degree of morality. For example, in the State of Utah, the Latter-day Saints, forming 62% of the population, furnish only 21% of the convicts in the state penitentiary.

While many factors contribute to such high morality, unquestionably the abstinence from intoxicating drinks and other nerve-whipping substances and the general self-control required by the Word of Wisdom favour high moral development. Crime seldom accompanies full mental and physical health.

A NECESSARY CONCLUSION.

The experience with the Word of Wisdom, covering nearly a century, is a convincing evidence of the value of this guide to health. The facts and figures above cited bear an undoubted relationship to the temperate and wise habits enjoined upon the Latter-day Saints in the Word of Wisdom.

HISTORY OF THE WORD OF WISDOM.

The Word of Wisdom was promulgated in 1833, by Joseph Smith the Prophet, as a revelation received from the Lord. Joseph Smith was of humble origin, with little school education. It is therefore the more marvelous that he should have been able to lay down a health code which fits perfectly into the scientific discoveries of later years, and which has given the remarkable results briefly mentioned above.

RELIGION AND HEALTH.

The manner in which the Word of Wisdom was received is evidence that it is held as a part of the religious system of the Latter-day Saints. In fact, in the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, the sanctity of the body is second only to that of the spirit. It is the duty, as well as the desire, of every person to preserve his physical health, so that he may live out most completely the destiny of his existence.

There is nothing new or novel in believing that health guidance may come from the Lord. The very story of the Garden of Eden hinges upon fruits permitted and forbidden, and the first parents were given the herbs and fruits of the earth to be their meat. The later Mosaic code is replete with directions for preserving health. The Saviour Himself taught repeatedly the care of the body. Physical health has always been and should be a main concern of true religion.

CONCLUSION.

The Latter-day Saints offer the Word of Wisdom to the world as one of the means by which full health may be won by all men. The rewards of obedience to this divine law are appealing: Health of body, mental strength, endurance, protection against the devastating scourges of the earth, and an understanding peace of mind.

Any person who will practise it will soon realize its beneficent effects; though it is best practised together with the other principles composing the true Gospel of Jesus Christ.