

## “Health in Their Navel and Marrow to Their Bones”

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In section 89 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Word of Wisdom promises, “All saints who remember to keep and do these sayings, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel and marrow to their bones; and shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures; and shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint. And I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them” (D&C 89:18–21). That leaders and members alike speak of section 89 in terms of health is no surprise; health, physical strength, and longevity are among its major rewards. Other than the law of chastity, the Word of Wisdom is one of the few guidelines relating directly to the physical body in a tradition where possession of a physical body is the essential component of both spiritual progression and salvation.

Following a brief history of the Word of Wisdom’s reception, this paper explores how members have associated health with the Word of Wisdom and what this interpretation might reveal. Health is rarely the only consequence

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mentioned when Church leaders advocate the Word of Wisdom; they also mention spiritual blessings or the blessing of wisdom or both. But this paper looks specifically at the discussion of health to decipher how a preoccupation with health has affected interpretations of the Word of Wisdom. I suggest that a fixation with health and the Word of Wisdom has resulted in two trends. First, some members have taken the health quotient of a substance as a way to expand Word of Wisdom boundaries either in the direction of allowances or prohibitions. Second, linking the Word of Wisdom with health has permitted some proponents (such as Leah and John Widtsoe) to expand notions of what this principle can accomplish. These trends represent the thinking of some members, but not the majority.

Lizzie Belle Gardner Fillmore drank black tea every morning of her life. And when she prayed to bless her food, she covered her tea cup with her hand.<sup>1</sup> “I have to do this so the Lord won’t see what’s in my cup,” she would say. Lizzie Belle was a practicing Mormon and the granddaughter of early Church Apostle and martyr Parley P. Pratt. The God she prayed to was omniscient and omnipotent; she knew he could see the tea beneath her hand. But she covered that tea nonetheless as an acknowledgment that she knew her tea was against the rules. The God she worshipped was also all-loving, and that is why she continued to pray every day over the meals but not the tea.

Lizzie Belle’s life (1876–1961) spanned an era of development in Word of Wisdom observance. The Word of Wisdom was born in 1833, three years after Joseph Smith organized The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Reaching consensus about a minimum standard of how to obey the Word of Wisdom, and what the penalty for noncompliance would be, took a hundred years. Thus, following the Word of Wisdom looked different in the nineteenth century than it does now.

For example, where the text of Doctrine and Covenants 89 says “And, again, strong drinks are not for the belly, but for the washing of your bodies” in verse 7, present-day Saints think only of abstaining from alcohol. But early members of the Church observed this injunction by washing their bodies with cinnamon-infused whiskey as a ritual preparation for holy gatherings and ceremonies.<sup>2</sup> Similarly, verse 5 instructs, “Inasmuch as any man drinketh wine or strong drink among you, behold it is not good, neither meet in the sight of your Father, only in assembling yourselves together to offer up your

sacraments before him.” This verse alludes to how early Saints used wine to recall Christ’s blood during the sacrament. Today, Saints use only water.

Early Church leaders encouraged members to follow the Word of Wisdom, but doing so was not strictly a commandment, and how to do so was not clearly defined. For many, living the Word of Wisdom was a process; President Brigham Young himself did not finally give up tobacco until 1860.<sup>3</sup> Paul Peterson has shown that it was not until 1883–84 that the Quorum of the Twelve renewed their commitment to following the Word of Wisdom, simultaneously admitting they had fallen short in that regard.<sup>4</sup> As President of the Twelve, Wilford Woodruff stated, “We have come to the conclusion that we will more fully observe the word of wisdom, as we have all more or less been negligent upon that point.”<sup>5</sup> On November 24, 1886, John D. T. McAllister and David H. Cannon from the St. George Temple wrote to President John Taylor saying they understood from the teachings of the Apostles that those who do not “fully keep” the Word of Wisdom should not participate in temple ordinances. They wondered “how far we are expected by the Lord, and those who preside over us, to judge in this matter. We find that people come here, with their recommends duly signed, who bear the evidence with them that they do not observe the Word of Wisdom, so far as Tobacco is concerned; and we have good reason to state that others come here who habitually use tea or coffee, or both.”<sup>6</sup> Several decades would pass before Word of Wisdom adherence was uniformly required for temple attendance.<sup>7</sup>

Although leaders encouraged members to obey the Word of Wisdom, when they saw that members would not and when they learned how much money was exported out of the community by members purchasing these commodities, they told them if they were going to partake of these things, then they should produce their own. “Over a five-year period beginning in 1861, many statements were made by Young, Wells, Kimball and especially Apostle George A. Smith, encouraging local production of tea, coffee, tobacco and alcoholic beverages for the Mormon market in order to save the money that was being sent out of the territory to purchase these items.”<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, Church leaders had differing interpretations of what it meant to follow this commandment. Lorenzo Snow, for example, felt that Church members should not eat meat. Defining and legislating compliance with the Word of Wisdom was a process—one heavily influenced by Joseph F. Smith, Heber J. Grant, and Leah and John A. Widtsoe. In 1902, President

Joseph F. Smith told stake presidents to refuse temple recommends to “flagrant” violators of the Word of Wisdom but to exercise leniency with older members who used tobacco or drank tea.<sup>9</sup> Under Heber J. Grant’s presidency in 1921, obedience to the Word of Wisdom (now officially defined as abstinence from coffee, tea, tobacco, and all forms of alcohol) was again declared a requirement for admission to the temple.<sup>10</sup> But not until 1933, when the revelation was one hundred years old, did the *General Handbook of Instructions* explicitly state that those desiring temple recommends must keep the Word of Wisdom.<sup>11</sup> According to the text itself, adherents should also eat many fruits and vegetables in season, lots of grain, and little meat. But individual members do so according to their own discretion.

Lizzie Belle’s grandchildren watched her cover her teacup when they were children, during the 1940s and ’50s. Because Word of Wisdom adherence was linked by then with temple worthiness, her grandchildren’s reminiscence about the tea is quickly followed by reassurance on how assiduously she kept her temple covenants. When Lizzie Belle was born on August 21, 1878, in Richfield, Utah (a year after Brigham Young’s death), many members of the Church still considered aspects of the Word of Wisdom to be optional. But by the time of her death in April 1961, keeping the Word of Wisdom was understood to be an important component of Mormon living.

Nevertheless, even as late as the 1960s, cultural attitudes towards coffee and tea were more relaxed than they are now.<sup>12</sup> Fifty years after Lizzie Belle’s death, her granddaughter, whom I will call Eloise, still drinks black tea every morning. She, too, is a practicing Mormon and a Church volunteer. Born around the time of Lizzie Belle’s death, Eloise’s daughter would never drink tea. Lizzie Belle drank tea sufficiently long ago that it makes for a good family story. Her granddaughter’s tea habit, on the other hand, is worrisome.

This pattern of slow change over time, in addition to defining the Word of Wisdom as a health law, has provided some members with a sense of license in interpretation. For example, when Eloise considers her own tea habits, her first impulse is to talk about health and to use the concept of health to expound on the text’s limitations. In this case, Eloise suggests that drinking tea is not an egregious transgression, because tea might not be bad for health. If the Word of Wisdom is only about health, and some forbidden substance is proven to promote health, then that substance becomes permissible. When medical science found benefit to resveratrol and flavonoids in red wine, for

example, a few members interpreted these findings as permission to drink red wine.<sup>13</sup> This is the kind of interpretation that Eloise suggests regarding tea: “For every study that says what in tea is bad for you, there is another telling you why it is good,” she asserts. “So I don’t think you can say one way or another whether it’s bad for you. . . . That depends on who is paying for the study. But I understand the part about obedience; I do get that.” Eloise initially evaluates her tea drinking in light of nutrition, as though the main goal of the Word of Wisdom is to safeguard health. However, Eloise also refers to the fact that when General Authorities speak about the Word of Wisdom, they often include another scripture as well: “There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—and when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated” (D&C 130:20–21). Church leaders teach that even when one does not see the purpose of following a rule, blessings come from following that rule, including an understanding of why the rule exists.<sup>14</sup>

Health can thus become the interpretive lens for discussions about what the Word of Wisdom will and will not allow. If someone learns that a substance is not harmful, she or he argues it should not be against the Word of Wisdom. On the other hand, upon learning that a substance is deleterious, some people will argue that it is against the Word of Wisdom. Coca Cola is a primary example of the latter situation. When members have asked whether Coca Cola is against the Word of Wisdom, the answer has generally been no. However, in 1917, Frederick J. Pack said Mormons should not drink it because it contains the same drugs as tea and coffee.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Joseph Fielding Smith, then President of the Quorum of the Twelve, responded to a 1965 question about cola drinks by focusing on health instead of the language of the original revelation: “I was definitely informed by a chemist that the cola drinks are just as harmful as tea or coffee, and his advice was to leave all such substances alone.”<sup>16</sup> In her devotional monograph, Doris T. Charriere argues that a person seeking to truly live the spirit of Word of Wisdom law will start by rejecting coffee, tea, alcohol, and tobacco but may eventually give up hot chocolate and pork and cease to eat significant amounts of starch and protein during the same meal.<sup>17</sup>

Leah and Elder John A. Widtsoe also spoke against cola drinks, and even chocolate, on the grounds of health. In addition, they expanded members’

understanding of what the Word of Wisdom might accomplish. These two were the Church’s most ardent and prolific advocates of Word of Wisdom observance. As a Harvard-trained chemist, John founded the Department of Agriculture at Brigham Young University and served as president of both Utah State University and the University of Utah. After earning degrees from the University of Utah and Brigham Young University (BYU), Leah trained at one of the country’s leading schools for domestic science, the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York.<sup>18</sup> By 1938, John and Leah completed their Church work for the European Mission and coauthored a book on the Word of Wisdom.<sup>19</sup> The First Presidency (President Heber J. Grant, first counselor J. Reuben Clark Jr., and second counselor David O. McKay)<sup>20</sup> embraced and designated this text as the official priesthood manual of study for 1938. A few years later, Leah Widtsoe wrote *How to Be Well*,<sup>21</sup> a work that aimed to review cutting-edge scientific information on nutrition that also served as a cookbook.

Elder Widtsoe’s foreword to *How to Be Well* reads like a manifesto and shows the moral gravity with which both of the Widtsoes regarded alimentary habits. “Th[e] dark pall of ignorance has been swept away, during the last few decades, by the light of discoveries, unparalleled in volume and importance. We now know, as never before, what foods, and food combinations, will best promote the health of the body. Those who do not respect and use these findings by seekers after truth, are willful offenders of their bodily needs; and of course, sooner or later, must pay the penalty of their error.”<sup>22</sup> In his view, scientific progress was a great blessing that at last provided knowledge about how best to care for the body. That anyone would have that knowledge and act against it was dreadful to him.

In Utah, both Leah and John Widtsoe became household names, and the Word of Wisdom was often called the “Word of Widtsoe.” Many found it difficult to follow the Widtsoes’ culinary standards, which prohibited refined sugar, white flour, too much meat, and even canned goods, as they represented an adulteration of fresh food and the possibility of eating items out of season. Leah insisted that even she had been unable to live the Word of Wisdom at times, because she did not grow her own food and modern agricultural methods polluted food. Leah believed that what we have come to call organic farming was central to the Word of Wisdom. She said, “I haven’t lived the Word of Wisdom because I couldn’t, can’t get the food. Our food is

nasty now-a-days, chemical fertilizer, doped with all kinds of dope conditioners and heaven knows what chemicals.” She argued that Word of Wisdom “dos” were at least as important as the “don’ts.” Though Winston Churchill smoked and drank, she said he lived to an old age because he lived the “dos”: he grew his own food on his country estate.<sup>23</sup>

Widtsoe believed bodies fortified by the Word of Wisdom were better able to resist temptation: “If the body is fully nourished, it will help give the will power to say ‘no’ to the tempter even though dressed in the false front of the ‘weed that soothes’ or the social glass that is supposed to give cheer and exhilaration, but which leads to degradation, disgrace, and death.”<sup>24</sup> In her view, good health makes it possible to resist the tobacco and wine that lead to the slow, insidious destruction of society. Widtsoe’s work bears echoes of the trend Marie Griffith noted in *American Protestantism*, wherein the inner self can be judged by the outer appearance.<sup>25</sup> But Griffith’s subjects focus on physical shape and slimness, while Leah looked inside the body to a physical interface between body and soul that could be controlled by good nutrition as stipulated by the Word of Wisdom.

In addition to believing that the Word of Wisdom would fortify individuals against temptation, Leah Widtsoe thought health was to some extent requisite for Saints to fulfill their earthly destiny. Here she diverges somewhat from Latter-day Saint theology, as well as from the domestic scientists.<sup>26</sup> Latter-day Saint teaching dictates that the purpose of life is the opportunity to gain a body and make choices while under the influence of that body. By learning to manage physical impulses and make appropriate choices, one can become godlike. But Widtsoe’s distaste for sickness (a recurrent refrain both in her written work and in her oral history) extended to a sense that illness kept people from the active participation in life, the experience gathering that allowed them to realize life’s purpose. Sickness interfered with the process of making choices while under the body’s influence.

An interview Leah Widtsoe gave four months before her death illuminates her beliefs well. The year was 1965, Widtsoe was ninety-one, and her husband had been dead for thirteen years. As she described her career path, she expressed the same sentiments that were in *How to Be Well*. Initially, she wanted to be a nurse, but then, she says,

I decided I didn't like to be around sick people. I'd much rather be around well people and I want to keep people well. . . . What's the use of being sick! . . . And, we shouldn't be sick, the Lord didn't intend it, I still feel that way. . . . The Lord gave us the Word of Wisdom to keep us well and if we're sick it's our own fault. . . .

*Interviewer (a BYU archivist):* Some people feel that we are here to gain experience and have to go through considerable sickness and pain.

*Widtsoe:* Fiddle! We gain experience in health rather than sickness.<sup>27</sup>

In Widtsoe's view, health was a condition necessary to fulfilling life's purpose. God revealed the Word of Wisdom when the Church was new because it would make a healthy people capable of completing his work. There was no redemption in physical suffering, just redemption from it, following the divine law of nutrition God had revealed.

Leah Widtsoe's enthusiasm for the Word of Wisdom turned both inward to the perfecting of her own religious community and outward with missionary zeal to the outside world. She was convinced that adherence to the Word of Wisdom would gather more of God's children to Zion. The good health of Mormons who followed the Word of Wisdom would attract others to the faith. Widtsoe saw the Word of Wisdom as a proselyting tool in two major respects. First, she saw the science of nutrition as a scientific, rational proof of the validity of the Word of Wisdom.<sup>28</sup> She believed that science had vindicated the calling of the Prophet Joseph Smith. God gave Joseph this law many decades before science had proved that the habits it outlined were optimal for human physical flourishing. As Leah and her husband argue in their own *Word of Wisdom* text:

Throughout these pages fact has crowded upon fact in support of the declaration of Joseph Smith, the Prophet, that the Word of Wisdom was revealed to him from heavenly sources. He would have stood helpless before the problem of human health had he relied on current knowledge or upon his own shrewd guesses. There are statements in the revelation that, in the light of modern knowledge, cannot be explained by any other means than that of inspiration.

Indeed, today, after more than 100 years the Word of Wisdom stands as one of the most convincing evidences of the divine inspiration of Joseph Smith, the “Mormon” Prophet.<sup>29</sup>

In addition to providing supporting evidence that God spoke to Joseph Smith, Widtsoe felt that the Word of Wisdom could bring others into the Church because they would see the remarkable health its members enjoyed. How could outsiders resist joining Zion and participating in its blessings once they witnessed its fruits? While her husband served as president of the European Mission, Widtsoe preached and wrote to Church members in Europe about the Word of Wisdom. She even compiled a small collection of recipes from local members and from her own experiments with local ingredients for dishes that exemplified Word of Wisdom standards as she saw them. She saw these writings as central to their proselytizing mission. Her introduction to the pamphlet shows her hope that people who follow God’s teachings would so radiate good health that others would want to join them:

This supplement is presented to you in the hope that an active participation in the teachings of the Word of Wisdom may be incorporated into the life of the members of the Church, who should be the healthiest, the happiest, as well as the best-living people on earth. To know a thing, or to know how it should be done is only half—to live the truth is as important as to know the truth. . . .

That diet is the greatest factor for health, few thinking people will deny. The Latter-day Saints are warned against the many “fads” which exist regarding food. An infallible guide is our inspired Word of Wisdom, which is a standard by which all advice is to be measured.

The following recipes and menus are in strict accord with the latest rules of accepted food science, which, almost miraculously, harmonize with the advice given nearly a century ago by an inspired modern prophet.<sup>30</sup>

Near the end of her life, Leah Widtsoe expressed her disappointment that Church members had failed to flourish through observing her broadened vision of the Word of Wisdom and had thereby failed to attract the membership they otherwise could. Much of her disappointment focused on BYU, where she had founded the Home Economics Department, lectured,

and served on the Board of Education and as dean of women. This was the university founded by and named for her grandfather, the second President of the Church, whom she adored and about whom she had coauthored a biography with her mother.

In her 1965 interview, she poignantly lamented the lack of health education at BYU. She was also disappointed in the Health Center, where ill students went to get well.

*Interviewer:* You don't think we're setting a high standard for the world to follow?

*Widtsoe:* This isn't a health center; this is a sickness center. . . . One of their leading men told me that that year they had over 33,000 applicants from sick students at the “Y,” 33,000! Then the attendance was only 11,000. . . . Our people don't have any better health than the rest of the world.<sup>31</sup>

Leah understood Church membership and its leading educational institution to have failed, despite her life's work, in the task that could have brought millions into God's fold.

Health matters to the Latter-day Saints because only through having a body can people continue to develop. For example, Elder Robert L. Simpson taught, “[Our] Loving Father has not left us without specific instruction concerning the care of our physical bodies, for he created us, and he knows that true happiness and total growth, moral, spiritual, and intellectual, are largely dependent upon our physical well-being.”<sup>32</sup> How one manages one's body affects one's spiritual development, and the two major guidelines regarding the physical body are the law of chastity (which, in addition to prohibiting sex outside of marriage, insists that members avoid impure thoughts and images) and the Word of Wisdom. Thus the Word of Wisdom becomes a key means by which one works out one's salvation. This somatism, or combining of body and spirit, means that those who obey laws governing the body are entitled to blessings that are less physically immediate as well, such as knowledge and wisdom. Elder Marion D. Hanks explained how he thought the Lord envisioned this process. After quoting D&C 88:15 (“the spirit and the body are the soul of man”), he said:

Later [the Lord] revealed again the truth that the elements—that is, the elements that make up our body—and the spirit in us, when they are combined, permit us to have a fullness of joy. These are eternally important principles. . . . One of the great purposes of mortal life is to take upon ourselves a mortal body (the elements), because in our eternal experience there will come a time of reunion of body and spirit. . . . It is vital that we do everything we can to preserve in honor and cleanliness and integrity this mortal body. It is part of our eternal soul.<sup>33</sup>

Despite such reminders of the Word of Wisdom's spiritual aspects, some Church members and leaders emphasized its health benefits to an extent that they used contemporary findings of nutrition science to either diminish or augment prohibitions. Some claimed that the relative harmlessness of a substance meant it did not violate the Word of Wisdom. Others believed that all deleterious items were against the Word of Wisdom. In addition, leaders like John and Leah Widtsoe expanded visions of what health resulting from the Word of Wisdom could accomplish. They spoke of the Word of Wisdom as providing the power to resist temptation, as being essential to fulfilling one's earthly destiny, and as aiding in missionary work.

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## Notes

1. Conrad L. Bryner, "Interview with Fillmore Descendants II," October 7, 2011; Judith Bryner Pobanz, Kathleen Stewart Holbrook, and Eloise, "Interview with Fillmore Descendants," October 3, 2011.

2. Leonard J. Arrington, ed., "Oliver Cowdery's Kirtland, Ohio, 'Sketchbook,'" *BYU Studies* 12, no. 4 (Summer 1972): 416.

3. Steven C. Harper, *The Word of Wisdom* (Orem, UT: Millennial Press, 2007), 58.

4. Paul H. Peterson, "An Historical Analysis of the Word of Wisdom" (master's thesis, Brigham Young University, 1972), 71.

5. "Minutes of the Salt Lake School of the Prophets," September 28, 1883, 52, Vault Corporate Records, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.

6. John D. T. McAllister and David H. Cannon to President John Taylor, "Letterpress Copybook, 1881–1887," November 24, 1886, Secure Stacks Corporate Records, Church History Library.

7. Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890–1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1996), 259–60.

8. Robert J. McCue, “Did the Word of Wisdom Become a Commandment in 1851?,” *Dialogue* 14, no. 3 (September 1, 1981): 70.

9. To reach the highest levels of salvation after death, members of the Church must make specific covenants with God in an LDS temple. They also receive the crowning blessings of earthly life during a temple endowment ceremony. Church members who live far from a temple might save money for years to visit the temple just once. Church employees throughout the world must be worthy of a temple recommend, from the gardeners at Temple Square in Salt Lake City to the faculty at BYU–Hawaii to Church administrators in Mexico City.

10. Lester Bush argued that this delay in compliance actually worked in favor of the Saints’ health because in many cases drinking alcohol, or tea or coffee made with boiled water, was safer than drinking unboiled water. Fresh water often carried the causes of diarrhea, cholera, dysentery, and typhoid—which could result in death. In addition, smoking (the most dangerous form of tobacco) was not really widespread until the twentieth century, and smoking-related deaths tend to occur a little later in life, past the general life span of people in the nineteenth century. “Whatever merit or function the Word of Wisdom had for the nineteenth century Mormons, in retrospect we know that circumstances changed around the turn of the century in such a way that its guidelines could unquestionably promote better physical health (i.e., there was more cigarette smoking, and less serious infectious disease). That this development—the implications of which were not apparent to the medical scientists for decades—coincided with a decision by the church leadership to require firm adherence to the Word of Wisdom is quite remarkable.” Lester E. Bush Jr., “The Word of Wisdom in Early Nineteenth-Century Perspective,” *Dialogue* 14, no. 3 (September 1, 1981): 60.

11. Thomas G. Alexander, “The Word of Wisdom: From Principle to Requirement,” *Dialogue* 14, no. 3 (September 1, 1981): 82. See also Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 258–71.

12. Anecdotal evidence abounds about faithful Church members who drank coffee or iced tea. An October 3, 1942, message from the First Presidency, read over the pulpit at general conference, suggests leaders were concerned over a diminishing, but still persistent, lack of compliance. “For more than half a century President Grant has on every appropriate occasion admonished the Saints touching their obligation to keep the Word of Wisdom. . . . But his admonitions have not found a resting place in all our hearts. We, the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, now solemnly renew all these counsels, we repeat all these admonitions, we reinvoke obedience to God’s law of health given us by God Himself. . . . We urge the Saints to quit trifling with this law and so to live it that we may claim its promises.” James R. Clark, comp., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965), 6:170–71.

13. Neither Mayo Clinic researchers nor Church leaders believe the potential benefits of these substances outweigh the negative health effects of drinking. Mayo Clinic staff, “Red Wine, Antioxidants and Resveratrol: Good for Your Heart?” Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/red-wine/HB00089>.

14. For example, Elder Simpson quotes this scripture and promises, "We are blessed by obedience to law. Transgression of the law always brings unhappiness." Robert L. Simpson, "God's Law of Health," *Improvement Era*, 1963, 488. See also Milton R. Hunter, "A Letter to My Son Michael," *Improvement Era*, 1963, 472.

15. Frederick J. Pack, "Should LDS Drink Coca Cola?," *Improvement Era*, March 1918, 432–35.

16. Joseph Fielding Smith, "Use of Cola Drinks and Playing Games of Chance," *Improvement Era*, September 1965, 759.

17. Doris T. Charriere, *Hidden Treasures of the Word of Wisdom* (Salt Lake City: Hawkes Publishing, 1978), 17–18.

18. Alan K. Parrish, *John A. Widtsoe: A Biography* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 2003), 61–64, 101–3; *In a Sunlit Land, the Autobiography of John A. Widtsoe* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1953), 28–41, 222.

19. John A. Widtsoe and Leah D. Widtsoe, *The Word of Wisdom: A Modern Interpretation* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1950).

20. James B. Allen and Glen M. Leonard, in *The Presidents of the Church: Biographical Essays*, ed. Leonard J. Arrington (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book, 1993), 298.

21. Leah D. Widtsoe, *How to Be Well: A Health Handbook and Cook-book Based on the Newer Knowledge of Nutrition* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1943).

22. Widtsoe, *How to Be Well*, 5.

23. Leah D. Widtsoe, "Widtsoe Oral History Interview," 1965, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, 40.

24. Widtsoe, *How to Be Well*, 33.

25. R. Marie Griffith, *Born Again Bodies: Flesh and Spirit in American Christianity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

26. However, Heather Curtis argues that the divine healing movement among charismatics had pushed toward that direction in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Heather D. Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician: Suffering and Divine Healing in American Culture, 1860–1900* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007).

27. Widtsoe, "Widtsoe Oral History Interview," 36, 40.

28. Deidra Boyack Jeffries, *The Word of Wisdom: A Weight-loss Diet* (Salt Lake City: Hawkes Publishing, 1984), 20. "Perhaps it is time that we as a people recognize that the Word of Wisdom is as profound a forerunner in nutritional prescriptions as it has proven to be medically prophetic regarding the consequences of the use of coffee, tea, alcohol and tobacco."

29. Widtsoe and Widtsoe, *Word of Wisdom*, 288.

30. Leah D. Widtsoe, "Word of Wisdom Menus and Recipes," *Millennial Star Supplement* 93, no. 10 (1931): 1.

31. Widtsoe, "Widtsoe Oral History Interview," 38–39.

32. Simpson, "God's Law of Health," 488.

33. Marion D. Hanks, "How Fortunate Can We Be?," *Improvement Era*, June 1965, 526.