

THE WORD OF WISDOM—DEGENERACY—WICKEDNESS IN THE
UNITED STATES—HOW TO PROLONG LIFE

REMARKS BY PRESIDENT BRIGHAM YOUNG, DELIVERED

IN TOOEELE CITY, AUGUST 17, 1867

Reported by G. D. Watt

I desire to say much to the people, but I fear I shall have to deny myself the satisfaction, unless I am strengthened of the Lord. I will present before you a few things with which I am more particularly impressed. I desire you to hearken to that which has been said during the session of this Conference, and to that which may yet be said during the continuation of our meeting.

We can enjoy the blessings of heaven, or we can deprive ourselves of that enjoyment. Intelligent beings have the power to exercise their free will and choice in doing good, equally as much as in doing evil. All have the privilege of doing evil if they are disposed so to do, but they will always find that the wages of sin is death. The Latter-day Saints, by their righteousness, can enjoy all the blessings which the Lord has promised to bestow upon His people, and they can, by their unrighteousness, deprive themselves of the enjoyment of those blessings. We, for instance, exhort the Saints to observe the Word of Wisdom, that they may, through its observance, enjoy the promised blessing. Many try to excuse themselves because tea and coffee are not mentioned, arguing that it refers to hot drinks only. What did we drink hot when that Word of Wisdom was given? Tea and coffee. It definitely refers to that

which we drink with our food. I said to the Saints at our last annual Conference, the Spirit whispers to me to call upon the Latter-day Saints to observe the Word of Wisdom, to let tea, coffee, and tobacco alone, and to abstain from drinking spirituous drinks. This is what the Spirit signifies through me. If the Spirit of God whispers this to His people through their leader, and they will not listen nor obey, what will be the consequence of their disobedience? Darkness and blindness of mind with regard to the things of God will be their lot; they will cease to have the spirit of prayer, and the spirit of the world will increase in them in proportion to their disobedience until they apostatize entirely from God and His ways.

This is no new or strange thing that you are required to do. Thirty-five years ago we were called upon to reform in our lives, by giving heed to the same Words of Wisdom; and if any man comes to you and tells you that you must have a little tea and a little coffee, by the same rule he may urge you to take a little tobacco and a little intoxicating liquor, or a little of any other substance which is hurtful to man. This destroys their claim and right to the spirit of revelation, and they go into darkness. There is not a single Saint deprived of the privilege of asking the Father,