

it is certain that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh."

"I am looking at a people who have been driven from their homes and firesides, sacrificing their goods to a wicked mob—seeking to find a place where they can be at peace, and when they get common sense enough they will enjoy it. If you ask the people to pay their tithing, some of them answer they are too poor; or if you ask them to pay their taxes to help build bridges and keep them in repair, they are too poor even to do that; and some cannot even go to Utah when they are wanted—but they can go very well to the gold mines, because that is their God. If I cannot put away tobacco or spirits, it proves that I am a slave to lust which tend to death."

"I behold goodness and kindness in a majority of this people, yet there are a few garrs and sharks that have been caught in the net, that are a disgrace to the whole. I do actually see men and families, who have not had raiment to wear, or a house to be in, in a sickly country—and now when they are well elad and are living in good houses, they want to leave them and go to California. I say unto them go your way, you are welcome, I am glad of it, and I do not care how quick they go, for they are corrupt, and want to hear blasphemy from Sunday morning to Saturday evening; to see card tables and drunkenness; many of them are bound to go to hell, where they will see, and hear, and feel the torments of the damned, and the time will come when they will be glad to come out again."

"Look again at the child with the fork, it may put out an eye with it; or when it has the razor, it may cut itself. Many of you, elders of Israel, are just as foolish; I tell it you in the name of the Lord God Almighty. Am I merciful to the weaknesses of man?—I am! I realize it! Were it not for the mercy of my Father in Heaven, I should have been cut down like many others. When I see a man commit folly in his weakness, am I to stretch out my hand to destroy that man?—No! But I will pull him out of the pit if I can; my heart is open, and I would as soon you could see it as my face. My Father in Heaven gives me the privilege of life and death, and if this privilege were taken from you, you would be mere machines, and cease to act on your agency."

"This people is addicted to, & it is a fault, to be always searching after doctrine, and never improving upon what they have; they want something new, something that they never heard. I doubt you have not heard all I have said this day. Get up here, ye elders of Israel, and tell what is in you! It is hard work to get a man to come on this stand, to feed the flock; how dormant you are. But many of the elders say they want to go away and preach to the people in the world. Is there any bigger folks than we are, that would hear you? Yes, there is. Ye elders of Israel, ye men of God, how much do you know about the Kingdom of God? and yet you are always wanting to know something more, when you ought to improve upon what you have!"

"The Prophet Joseph said to me, about sixteen years ago, 'if I was to show the Latter Day Saints all the revelations that the Lord has shown unto me, there is scarce a man that would stay with me, they could not bear it.' What is there so horrid, that you cannot bear it? Every trait in character that has been

infused into man, since the fall, is as diametrically opposed as light is to darkness.

Ye elders of Israel, do you know the ways of God? If the Lord himself was to speak, to tell the Latter Day Saints what to do, he would come in the capacity of an elder in Israel, and he would preach to you—you would hear precisely the very things that you do now. You may think I do not know, but I know you don't. Let me reveal a little of the will of the Lord. If you do not believe that I tell you the very truth as the secret of the heart of God, you never will be nigher to him than you now are. If he were to come in his power and glory you would dissolve away and go down to hell. He will either appear, and you dissolve away, or he will come in the capacity of a man."

"Many men think ten times more of a foolish, untimely dancing party, than of a prayer meeting. The man that knows the things of God, can say as the old Prophet did, 'I would rather spend one day with the Lord, than ten thousand days elsewhere. One good conference, one evening spent in this manner is sweeter to me than all the frolics that can be got up. Dancing is only to exercise the body, to enable it to attend to things of greater importance. When eternal principles are carried out to every portion of human life, from the birth to the grave, they bring peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.'"

"I will now refer to the Seventies as a body—suppose I should appoint a meeting for tonight, about a dozen would come, without any candles—but if I were to say—level this stand for the band that we may have a dance, they would bring the stoves from their wives' bedsides, and would dance all night, and the house would be filled to overflowing. O foolish elders! you are like the foolish child, you want the fork to put out your eyes. I make the same application to the High Priests and Elders. I feel sometimes that I could cuff every elders ears—at other times I could cry over their follies. I have good reason for these remarks."

"Elders, ask yourselves this question—'am I not an elder, am I not to preach to all, saints and sinners?' The proof of your choice is in your conduct. Now appoint your meetings, and if you want a partner, the Lord will go with you, and the next meeting you appoint you will have a third person with you. As for myself, I would rather sit down in the poorest house in this place, and converse on the things of God, than go to 99 out of 100 parties that are got up—and these are my real feelings. I go, to please my brethren. There is no sin in all the acts of mankind, only to him that makes it a sin. There is no evil in any thing, only to him that makes it so; we ought to do all things that tend to building up the Kingdom, and to the glory of God."

SCHOOL HOUSE, BIG COTTONWOOD,  
December 30, 1850.

Bro. Parley P. Pratt,

Dear Sir:—I hardly know how to address you, but I have set myself to work to learn something in relation to this kingdom.

The first question:—Is it the duty of a man who comes into this church (and who has no parents or relatives in the church,) to be adopted into the family of any other man? or is it my duty to be adopted into the family of any brother who is in this church; and if so, have I the privilege to be adopted into the family of any brother that I may choose? If

yea is the answer, please to explain the matter fully.

2nd. Can a man who has all the natural parts of a man, and lives as he should in this church, ever reach the celestial kingdom of God if he have no wife, and raise no family in this world? Please explain.

3rd. Is it the duty of parents to bless their children, or is it their duty to take them to the patriarch of the church to be blessed?

4th. What caused the banishment of Satan from the presence of God? Please explain fully.

5th. Please to explain the resurrection of the dead in the first, second, and all other resurrections.

6th. From what place are the forces of Gog and Magog, as spoken of by John the Revelator, to come?

By giving me an answer to the foregoing questions, you will not only enlighten my understanding upon these points, but will remove several serious "stumbling blocks" that constantly lie in my path. My object is to learn all that I can in regard to Mormonism, not only for my own good, but that I may benefit a father and mother, who are many thousand miles from this place, and who have never heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, as revealed in the last days.

A letter addressed to me, to the care of bro. Saml Snider, and left at bro. F. D. Richards' will find me.

Feeling a deep and abiding interest in this work, as renewed in these the last days, I have the pleasure of saying that I remain your brother in the bonds of the everlasting covenant,

ANDREW SILER.

G. S. L. CITY, Jan. 6, 1851.

Mr. Andrew Siler,

Dear Brother:—I received your favor of the 30th ult., and proceed to answer the same.

Answer to question first. I do not know.

2nd. Every man in this church, who lives as he should, will be saved in the celestial kingdom.

3rd. Parents may bless their children—so may the patriarch.

4th. I either was not present at the banishment of Satan, or have forgotten the particulars. The probability is, that he wished to go to a warmer climate for his health.

[Quite possible he searched so deeply after the "mysteries" of the kingdom, that he neglected his duties, as many do at the present day. Ed.]

5th. I have not the keys of the resurrection, having never experienced it.

6th. Do not know, unless it is from the four quarters of the earth, or from the gold mines.

In reply to the other observations contained in yours; I would advise you to instruct your parents to seek out the elders of the church of the saints, and forsake their sins, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of the same, and they shall receive the Holy Ghost, and be saved, if they endure to the end.

As to stumbling blocks, if all are as busy as I am, they will never have time to stumble over them, let alone removing them.

Please excuse brevity, and believe me your brother in the gospel,

P. P. PRATT.