

study it, much of the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. I wish we had more desire to study these things. I am thankful that this disposition is increasing in the Sunday schools, the theological classes, and among the Elders, and that they are also studying the principles of our church history. Great is the mystery of godliness, said one anciently, and it is just as mysterious now. Some men are going nearly crazy over trying to reconcile some of the scriptures. The Apostle Peter said Paul had written epistles, "in which are some things hard to be understood." There are scriptures that are difficult to be understood, unless we can obtain the light of the Holy Spirit to shine upon our understandings.

We are apt to read over a great many scriptures just as we walk over portions of these valleys and mountains, in which are lying, perhaps within a few inches of our feet, treasures of gold, silver and other precious metals, and it only needs a little stirring of the soil to find where the great deposits of this wealth are, where the rich pockets of gold are treasured up, and the veins of silver are waiting to be gathered out. It is so with the scriptures. There are many passages that we read over hastily and do not comprehend, which, if we would stop and search other scriptures relating to them, we would often find wonderful developments of truth in their explanations. In the early days of the Church the Lord instructed the Elders to meet together and expound His scriptures to one another, that they might comprehend them and be built up in their holy faith, which they did.

When the Savior was upon the earth and had His apostles with Him, there were some that adhered very closely to Him. They learned things of Him which others did not get, or if they did they have not left them on record for us. John, the beloved disciple, continued much with the Savior. He was very fond of being in His company. At the last supper he sat next to Him, and laid his head upon His breast. The Lord was fond of him, inasmuch that he was called the beloved disciple, and he, being familiar with the Savior, obtained many precious items of revelation, choice sayings and parables that the others did not get. The evangelists Matthew and Mark wrote many things that the Savior and other brethren did, but there were some things omitted by them which are contained in Luke's and more particularly in John's writings. Indeed so strong and mutual were their attachments that when the Savior was about to leave the earth He gave John the insuperable blessing that he should not die, but that he should tarry till He, Christ, should come. History tells us that John was placed in a caldron of boiling oil and came out unhurt. We have no authentic account of his death or burial. The Savior said, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is it to thee?" When he was a prisoner on the Isle of Patmos, working in the mines, he received the wonderful revelation, contained in the Bible, in which he saw a character riding upon a white horse, and his name was "The Word of God" (Rev. xix, 13.) In writing his Gospel and giving some account of this being, John says,

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were

made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

This is the description of the coming of the Savior in the flesh. This character in the beginning was the One by whom the world was created. "Without Him was not anything made that was made." Before He was tabernacled in the flesh He did His mighty works in creating the earth with all its inhabitants, fish, fowls, beast and man; teaching Enoch to build a city, then translating it for him and his people. He destroyed the wicked with a flood; established Noah and his race, then educated a righteous people, delivered them from oppression by miraculous providences through the Red Sea and made them a powerful nation. Moses, whom Jehovah had employed to do so many of his wondrous works, asked the Lord to show him concerning "this Heaven and this earth."

The Lord has not thought proper to reveal unto us much of the vastness of His heavenly works; but He once received Moses into His presence on the mountain and showed him "concerning this heaven and this earth," and there gave him the revelation concerning the creation of the earth and the seven days' work and commanded him to write it. In this interview he was a personage of spirit. He also showed Himself unto the brother of Jared, Mahonri Moriancum, and informed him that His body of spirit was just the figure that His body of flesh should be when born of woman.

He not only had this name, "The Word of God," but He had other titles. By searching the Scriptures we find some twenty or thirty of them. But in speaking of this, He said to Moses, (Exodus vi, 3,) "Your fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to whom I revealed myself, knew Me by the name of Almighty God, but by my name Jehovah they did not know Me." At different times He told Israel that He was Jehovah until He came and dwelt in the flesh. Then He was the Son of God—the Christ. It is said concerning Him by one of the ancient prophets (Isaiah ix, 6,) that "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the EVERLASTING FATHER, the Prince of Peace." These were a few of the names that were given to Him besides some that John saw—such as the Word of God, King of kings and Lord of lords. Now this name of Father is a wonderful name. It is over this that some of the brethren stumble, and they get very erroneous ideas concerning the Savior. One man has worried at it until he has nearly worried himself out of the Church, and it was thought he would have gone to the asylum because of his incongruous ideas over it. What is it to be a father? We understand generally the term father to mean one who becomes the parent of children. The fact that he is endowed with power to procreate his species by the blessing of God enables him to become a father. There is a beginning to his fatherhood. As John said "In the beginning was the Word." There was a beginning to the creation of the earth. There is a beginning to the creation of a man's family. But that is not the only sense of a father. A father when taken in a more general sense signifies something more, according to the Scriptures. Joseph

said to his brethren, (Genesis xlv, 18,) "He [God] hath made me a father to Pharaoh." Why? Because he had given him the power, the wisdom and the understanding to lay up food during the seven years of plenty, so that he saved not only Egypt, but enabled Pharaoh and Egypt to save the nations around by letting them have food to eat in their terrible necessities. In the Scriptures Satan is called the father of lies, the father of deceit, of misrepresentation, contention and strife. George Washington is called the father of this nation, by his skill, his warlike prowess and the readiness to stand at the head of his people, first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen, and he so became the father of our country. Just so we may say concerning others. As for instance the man who discovered the control of lightning. Although Franklin brought it down from heaven in safety, yet it was left for Professor Morse to be the father of telegraphy and otherwise communicate intelligence by it around the world. Mr. Watt was the father of steam power, by discovering its elasticity and applying it to mechanics as motive power. So with the Prophet Brigham Young. He was the father of Utah, because under God he led the people and established them here, to become a Territory or state, and made it possible for many others to come and live here. We see, by the foregoing, the meaning of a father in this general and broad sense is a creator, a controller, a manager. Hence it was that the Prophet Isaiah said concerning the Lord Jesus, He shall be called "the Everlasting Father." The Prophet Mosiah (Book of Mormon, fifteen chapter, verses 2, 3 and 4,) has told us that because of the Spirit He was the Father, and because of His having been born in the flesh He was the Son, and therefore He is called the very Eternal Father of Heaven and earth, which really means that He was the very eternal Creator of Heaven and earth. In the beginning He created the heavens and the earth. Thus when we get an understanding of the things of God and comprehend them, some of the difficult sayings of the Scripture become plain and easy to be understood. If we turn to the first chapter of John's revelation, and sixth verse, we find that great glory and dominion will be given unto Him "Who hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father." So we see that He does not assume to be the Father of all, but He was the Father of heaven and earth, and was to make men kings and priests unto Himself and His Father, knowing that He and His Father were two persons, as is distinctly maintained in all the Scriptures. By this we can see that as we read the Scriptures we read over great and wonderful descriptions of knowledge, just as when we uncover the mines we find great treasures of wealth. The mines, when they are found, are not pure gold or silver, but other materials have to be brought together to put with them—what they call fluxing materials—to separate the pure metal from the dross, and to bring out the genuine article fit for market. So if we search the Scriptures we find the principles described and the instructions given by which we are enabled to understand these truths in a similar way, and to comprehend the difference between the truth and the error.

I wish the brethren would study the