

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC

Lesson: Genesis 22:1-19

There is one very strange story told about Abraham in the 22nd Chapter of Genesis. It begins with these words, "And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham."

Now the Writings tell us that the Lord himself never tempts people to do evil. But He does permit the evil spirits in hell to put their bad suggestions into our minds in order that we may learn little by little to grow stronger by using the truths from Him to overcome them. In this way also we find out how weak we are and how much we need the Lord to help us. But the stories in the Word, in the natural sense, are all written in the way these things appeared to the men of that time. So it appeared, or seemed to Abraham, that it was the Lord, Himself whose voice told him to do something, while it was really evil spirits.

But the Lord let it happen so that He might permit Abraham to learn a great lesson. It showed Abraham that he could always trust the Lord if he himself was trying to obey what he really believed the Lord had commanded, because the Lord did not let the evil thing happen after all. Read now this story in Genesis 22.

Now let us think about this story some more.

There is much in it which we can't see so clearly until we are further advanced in understanding the Writings, but some of the spiritual brightness does shine through. We see in it the lesson that if we are sincerely trying to do what we understand to be the commands of the Lord, He will be with us in our temptations and will help to keep us from evil deeds.

Abraham was a very simple hearted man, and the best that the Lord could expect of him was obedience. That is why Abraham's journeys and all that happened to him are great allegories of the thing that happen to us when we are learning to obey and to understand. Such as when we learn the first simple truths that our parents and teachers tell us and when we try to remember that we should not do this or should do that because the Lord has told us to.

Obedience and these little things in our young lives don't seem so very important sometimes, but someday you will find that they are the very most important things of all. Because into these first beginnings of learning truth and loving good and kind things, we learn as we grow up to fill in the very highest things that can come into our hearts from God. Because the innocence

of childhood, and the wisdom we learn later by living as God asks us to live, are both a part of every angel.

This is something the Lord himself said about that when He was in the world: "Who so shall not accept the kingdom of heaven as a little child shall not enter therein." And he said also, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

So you see it is very important that we learn to obey and to love things good and true when we are young, and to think about obeying the Lord, and obeying our parents. This builds in our minds an inner place clean and beautiful, where the Lord can start building our spiritual minds, which will later grow into beautiful angels if we keep following Him.

Our spiritual country is always being created about us to match our spiritual minds, and only that can make heaven for us.

This brings us toward the end of Abraham's history though there is more we might read of his journeys and all that happened to him. You may read anything you can find in the Word about him and think about it and see if you can find any more suggestions of obedience and trust in the Lord.