

built the altar, laid on the wood, bound his son and laid him on the altar; (4) he stretched forth his hand and took the knife, to plunge it into the side of his beloved son.

Vv. 11, 12.—The purpose of God is accomplished. Isaac is not slain, for this was not intended, yet he has been offered up by his father. It was in his heart to obey God fully in this matter. God regards it as done, and has caused to be recorded these memorable words, "By faith, Abraham when he was tried, offered up Isaac."

Vv. 13, 14.—Truly God himself provided a lamb, and in the mount of the Lord many glorious things were seen by Abraham, and will be discerned by those who re-visit that mount through all time; (1) the divine all sufficiency and mercy were seen in that the Lord himself did provide a sacrifice; (2) divine goodness and grace were seen in the renewal of the covenant with superadded securities for the confirmation of faith,—v. 17, 18; (3) the day of Christ was seen,—John viii. 56. The necessity of atonement by the Saviour if the promised seed be spared, was seen. The shedding of blood on mount Moriah was seen. The father giving up the son, and the son surrendering himself, were all wonderful things, and will be ever suggestive of the truth contained in John iii. 16, and Eph. v. 28.

#### LESSONS.

1. God proportions the trials of his people to their strength. Ver. 1. After these things, &c.

2. A satisfying acquaintance with the divine will, contributes the basis of true and enduring faith. Ver. 2. *The Lord said, Take thy son.*

3. The glory of faith is prompt obedience. Duty being once known let us close our eyes against difficulties and hindrances.

4. The results of uncompromising obedience are blessed. Ver. 16, 17. The Lord is a rewarder. Heb. xi. 6; Gen. xv. 1.

5. The Lord will carry his people through all their trials. V. 19. Abram returned home in peace. 2 Tim. iv. 18.

#### DOCTRINE TO BE PROVEE.

God must be implicitly obeyed. Num. ix. 33; Deut. v. 29, 33, also chap. vi. 24, 25; 1 Sam. xv. 22; Ps. cxix. 60; Acts iv. 19; Gal. i. 15, 16.

#### FOURTH SABBATH.

SUBJECT: *The death and burial of Sarah.* Gen. xxiii.

V. 1.—There is no other woman named in the bible whose age, death and burial are all recorded. Sarah was sixty-five when she left Haran with her husband, she lived with him in his pilgrimage sixty-two years, and died thirty-eight years before him.

V. 2.—Respecting the antiquity of Kir-

jath Arba, or Hebron, see Num. xiii. 22. For the origin of the name see Josh. xiv. 15. In Hebron, Abraham lived and David reigned, yet it is chiefly celebrated as the burying place of patriarchs. Sarah was first buried there, but afterwards Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Leah and Joseph. "Abraham came to mourn for Sarah." Though not faultless she was a good woman, a loving wife and kind mother. For more than half a century they had walked together in the nearest relationship, and their joys, sorrows and anxieties were reciprocal.—Abraham therefore felt deeply the pang of separation. *He is no stoic.* His feelings naturally strong were purified and intensified by religion. Religion does not require us to crush these feelings. Abraham wept at Hebron, a greater than he wept at Bethany. All but the hardened will still go forth carrying precious seed and weeping.

V. 3.—As there is a time to weep so there is a time to refrain. There is a time to address ourselves to the duties before us. Samuel had to be called from weeping to acting. Abraham rises from the earth to bury his dead out of his sight. What a terrible change is produced by death when we are anxious to day to bury out of our sight those who yesterday were the joy of our dwellings. Let the young, and the lovely, and the light hearted, think of this humbling truth.

Vv. 5, 6.—Mark the estimation in which Abraham is held.

V. 7.—How marked and genuine, and worthy of imitation is the politeness of the friend of God.

Vv. 8, 9.—The first money transaction on record consisted in the purchase of a grave.

Vv. 10, 11.—In courtesy, Ephron will not be out done by Abraham. The Orientals to this day are much more remarkable for politeness than for sincerity. The tendering of the field by the Hittite, and his reluctance to name a price, would not, in all probability, interfere with the taking of the full price from the Hebrew. At all events, Abraham will buy the field and possess it as his own. It is a present instalment and pledge for the ultimate possession of the land. He cannot now get possession of the whole territory. Meanwhile he will there bury his dead, and wait in patient expectation God's time.

Vv. 12-18.—God's promise will be fulfilled and Abraham will now purchase a field and bury his dead, in the assurance of possessing the land. A similar compact and made with a very similar object in view is recorded in Jer. xxx. 6-16; xlii. 44. Jeremiah foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and also its restoration at the close of the seventy years. He buys land and gets a title, under divine direction, not that he or