

painful part of this most trying ordeal, submitted to be bound and laid on the altar by his father without resistance. 6. The Divine interposition. The angel of the Lord called to him out of heaven. The word translated *angel*, means, in the original, a *messenger*—one sent. Our Saviour told the Jews that he was sent into the world, John x. 11; and again, God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, John iii. 17. The angel of the Lord who addressed Abraham was therefore the angel of the covenant, our blessed Saviour himself, the Lord Jesus Christ. 7. In Abraham's extremity the Lord appeared for his relief. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. Abraham's sorrow was turned into gladness. His beloved Isaac, in whose stead a substitute had been provided, was restored to his love; and by his act of faith he obtained not only the approbation but the applause of his heavenly Father. 8. "Now I know that thou fearest God," v. 12. By works was Abraham's faith made perfect. It is vain for any one to profess love to God, if he does not manifest his love by his works, so far as he has the power and opportunity. When circumstances render it impossible for us to evidence our faith and love by our works, the Lord accepts the willing mind. Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac, so clearly shown, was accepted by God for the deed. There was nothing which Abraham would have refused to part with for the sake of the Lord, seeing that he withheld not from him his son Isaac, his only son, whom he loved. And if God in his generous love for us spared not his only and well-beloved Son, is there anything consistent with his own glory and our good that he would keep from us?—Rom. viii. 32.

Learn—1st. That the Lord delights in trying the faith of his people.—Job vii. 17, 18.

2nd. That the Lord sustains the believer under every trial.—1 Cor. x. 13.

3rd. The Lord brings good to his people out of apparent evils.—Rom. viii. 28.

4th. God's love of his church.—John iii. 16.

Pictures for the Children.

ABRAHAM OFFERING ISAAC.

You may remember of reading in one of your former lessons of Abraham and Sarah, when they were both old and well stricken in years, one day entertaining three angels under a tree beside their tent, when they dwelt in the plains of Mamre. One of these angels, who turned out to be the Lord, told them just as He was leaving, that they would have a son not long after. All God's words are sure, and so it was here, they had a son whom

they named Isaac; and through this Isaac God had promised them a numerous seed.

Abraham and Sarah were much respected wherever they went, for they were not only very rich, but also upright and godly. They were both very old, and expected soon to go down to the grave, but they were happy; they had Isaac now, about twenty years old, budding into manhood, who would inherit their all. Time passed pleasantly over the inmates of that happy home. Sarah was delighted to see her son increasing in stature, and in knowledge from year to year. And Abraham, no doubt, felt proud when he walked out into his orchard at Beersheba, or visited his flocks in company with his Isaac, telling him of all his adventurous sojournings, of his visits from angels, and what they said; of the smoking furnace and burning lamp, that passed between the pieces of his sacrifice, and of the Lord appearing to him in terrible grandeur and saying, "I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect." But while this delightful calm pervades the tents of Abraham, he receives the strange command from God, "Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of." What a command was this! Every clause seems calculated to make Abraham rebel. It is not take thy servant, but *thy son*, and not simply a son, but *thine only son*, thy Isaac, whom thou lovest. And what is he to do with so much that was dear? Not to send him into the woods as he had done with Ishmael. This would have been bad enough for his parental heart to bear. Neither is he commanded to give him up that another might sacrifice him to Jehovah, but to go himself into the land of Moriah, and offer Isaac for a burnt offering. No one will do for the altar but Isaac, and no one must be the priest but Abraham. Any one but an Abraham would have reasoned thus, Whence shall the promised nation come if Isaac is to die? Shall not the very heathen despise me if I put my own son to death? And if he must die can no one be got to perform the bloody act but Abraham, his father? An ordinary man might have met the command with such thoughts as these; but, when God gave the command, He knew He had to do with an Abraham, and Abraham, when he heard it, knew that he had to do with a God, even Jehovah. And Abraham's silence on this occasion shows him to great advantage.—When he heard of his friends being in imminent danger in Sodom, he drew near unto the Lord and reasoned with him in prayer, "Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? That be far from thee to do after this manner;" but when he is himself to be the suffer-