

tions there how they were to act; but he feared God and put his trust in him, and the Lord gave him revelation. The angel of the Lord, we are told, visited Abraham and his wife, and told her she should have a son. Sarah was a good deal amused at it, and laughed over the matter, for she was about seventy years old and thought it rather strange that she should have a son at that age, and she laughed at the idea, as many of our old sisters would unquestionably do now if they were told such a thing. It seems all very natural when you look at it just about as it is. And when the angel asked her why she laughed, she lied and said: "I did not laugh," she did not want to have it known that she laughed at what the Lord said. "Nay; but," said he, "thou didst laugh." And as the time came round, lo and behold she had a son and called his name Isaac. And after this the Lord seemed determined to try Abraham and see whether or not he would be faithful to him and obey him in all things. He had obeyed him in breaking up those Gods, and in leaving his father's house and going up to a land that he had shown unto him, and the Lord was determined to try him to the uttermost, and see whether he would obey him yet further. "Now," said he, "Abraham, Take thy son, thine only son Isaac, and go to a place that I will indicate, and offer him up as a burnt offering before me." That was a curiosity, it had something odd and strange about it. It was not really what you would call philosophical; it was not in accordance with any principles that we could understand anything about, in our day; and it would have been difficult for Abraham to have reasoned it out why he should be called to offer up his son as a sacrifice. Nothing of the kind had

ever transpired before as a precedent; no such thing written in the Bible that had taken place among men before. In offering up his only son there was something very peculiar, not especially as a sacrifice, but it came in contact with every parental feeling which he must necessarily have felt for his only child. This, in and of itself, rendered it one of the most severe and painful trials that could be placed upon man; but there was something else connected with this which was explained by the Prophet Joseph Smith, who, when speaking of these things, said God was determined in these days to have a tried people as He had in former times, and that he would feel after their heartstrings and try them in every way possible for them to be tried; and if he could have invented anything that would have been more keen, acute, and trying than that which he required of Abraham he would have done it. But that, no doubt, was one of the greatest trials that could have been inflicted on any human being. Notice the old gentleman tottering along with his son, brooding over the promises of God and the peculiar demand now made upon him. Says he: "Isaac, let us go up into the mountain here, and offer a sacrifice to the Lord." And he took him along; they ascend the mountain, they gather together some rocks and together build an altar; they gather the fuel and place it on that altar; and when everything is prepared Isaac says: "Father, here is the altar and here is the wood: but where is the sacrifice?" What would the feelings of a father be under such circumstances? Says he, with a heart gushing with sorrowful emotions, "My son, God will prepare himself a sacrifice," and finally the old man gave his son to understand that he was the sacrifice, and he bound him and placed him on the