

Readings from the Word of God

2 January 2022

Genesis 16:4-10

⁴ And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes. ⁵ Then Sarai said to Abram, “My wrong be upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. Jehovah judge between you and me.” ⁶ So Abram said to Sarai, “Indeed your maid is in your hand; do to her as you please.” And when Sarai disciplined her, she fled from her presence.

⁷ Now the Angel of Jehovah found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. ⁸ And He said, “Hagar, Sarai’s maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?” She said, “I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai.” ⁹ The Angel of Jehovah said to her, “Return to your mistress, and discipline yourself under her hand.” ¹⁰ Then the Angel of Jehovah said to her, “I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude.”

Secrets of Heaven §1931

In the Word, even though Jehovah knows already, it is common for Jehovah to question someone and for people to make replies to Him. He knows not only what took place but also the causes and the ends, thus every least intimate detail. But since a person is not aware of this and believes that nobody else can possibly know what he does in secret, and still less what he thinks, that which takes place therefore does so in accordance with his belief.

Secrets of Heaven §2693

One reads in various places in the Word of people being questioned about their state, but the reason why they are questioned is this: a person has no other belief than that no one knows his thoughts, let alone the state of his affection. An added reason is that people may be helped by being able to express their feelings which usually does them good.

Genesis 21:14-20

¹⁴ So Abraham rose early in the morning, and took bread and a skin of water; and putting it on her shoulder, he gave it and the boy to Hagar, and sent her away. Then she departed and wandered in the Wilderness of Beersheba. ¹⁵ And the water in the skin was used up, and she placed the boy under one of the shrubs. ¹⁶ Then she went and sat down across from him at a distance of about a bowshot; for she said to herself, “Let me not see the death of the boy.” So she sat opposite him, and lifted her voice and wept.

¹⁷ And God heard the voice of the lad. Then the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said to her, “What ails you, Hagar? Fear not, for God has heard the voice of the lad where he is. ¹⁸ Arise, lift up the lad and hold him with your hand, for I will make him a great nation.”

¹⁹ Then God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. And she went and filled the skin with water, and gave the lad a drink. ²⁰ So God was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.

Secrets of Heaven §2694:2, 4

The fact that those who are being reformed are brought into a state of not knowing any truth, that is, into a state of desolation, insomuch that they experience grief and despair, and that at this point for the first time they receive comfort and help from the Lord, is something that is not known at the present day for the reason that few are being reformed.

When [who have become firmly persuaded that once they have been made righteous no evil resides with them any longer] are brought into a particular state in order that they may perceive hell within themselves, and perceiving this so clearly as to despair of the possibility of their own salvation, that firm persuasion is for the first time broken down and with it their pride and their contempt for all others in comparison with themselves, and also their arrogant assumption that they are the only ones who are saved. They can now be brought into a true confession of faith...; and at length they can be brought into humility of heart before the Lord, the existence of which is impossible without acknowledgement of what they are in themselves.