

THE TEST OF SACRIFICE

Genesis 22:1-18 (NIV)

1 *Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied.*

2 *Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about."*

3 *Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about.*

4 *On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance.*

5 *He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you."*

6 *Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together,*

7 *Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "The fire and wood are here," Isaac said, "but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"*

8 *Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son." And the two of them went on together.*

9 *When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.*

10 *Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.*

11 *But the angel of the LORD called out to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Here I am," he replied.*

12 *"Do not lay a hand on the boy," he said. "Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son."*

13 *Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son.*

14 So Abraham called that place *The LORD Will Provide*. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided."

15 The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time

16 and said, "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son,

17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies,

18 and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

- Sacrificial giving is the ultimate level of giving.
- In this passage of scriptures, sacrificial giving was used as a test from God to see if Abraham would obey.
- The passing of this test determined the harvest that God had waiting for him.
- When you give sacrificially it changes something on the inside of you.
- No one ever gives sacrificially with ease.
- Notice God asked Abraham to give his only son, the one that he loved.
- Sacrificial giving always requires us to release something that is valuable and precious to us.
- After Abraham made a sacrifice to God he said, "The Lord will provide."
- Sacrificial giving always leaves you dependent on God.
- You have to get your faith working and begin to say, "The Lord will provide for me after I offer this sacrifice."

THE REWARD OF SACRIFICE

1 Kings 17:7-16 (NIV)

7 Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land.

8 Then the word of the LORD came to him:

9 "Go at once to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have commanded a widow in that place to supply you with food."

10 So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, "Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?"

11 As she was going to get it, he called, "And bring me, please, a piece of bread."

12 "As surely as the LORD your God lives," she replied, "I don't have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die."

-Notice that she immediately went to give what was easy for her (water), but the moment Elijah required more she had a reason for not being able to obey.

13 Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small cake of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son."

-Notice that Elijah asked her to give from what she already had.

-God never requires you to give something that He doesn't think you can give.

-If God is asking for it, He will make a way for it.

-Notice Elijah said for her to give him something first, and then she was to use the rest for herself.

-God will always require you to put Him first.

14 For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the LORD gives rain on the land.' "

15 She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family.

16 For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the LORD spoken by Elijah.

-The widow gave of something very precious to her and her family.

-She took care of the man of God and God took care of her.

-Her obedience to sow a sacrificial seed, provided for her in a time of drought.

-There are some situations in life that no job, money, or person can pull you out of. Only your trust and reliance upon God will bring you increase in a time of decrease.

THE SEED OF SACRIFICE

Mark 12:41-44 (NIV)

41 *Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts.*

42 *But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny.*

43 *Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others.*

44 *They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything—all she had to live on."*

- God never looks at the amount He looks at the sacrifice.
- When Jesus died on the cross, God never looked at the sin of man, He looked at the sacrifice.
- Have you ever sacrificed anything to the Lord?
- Is there something right now in your life that God has been asking you to sacrifice, but you have had a hard time obeying?
- Sometimes the Lord asks us to sacrifice things that mean the most to us.
- God always has a bigger picture in mind, but sometimes all we can see is the immediate.
- Sacrificial giving will bring you to a place of brokenness where God can put you together the way He wants you.
- Jesus died of himself, when are we going to die of ourselves?
- We should live our lives as a living sacrifice unto God.
- Giving is a supernatural system that God has designed to supply the needs of His children.

"When you give something that you can't afford to give, you'll get something that you can't afford to buy."

- The sacrificial giver taps into a realm that the average tipper will never see.
- The seed of sacrifice will always produce a harvest of more than enough in your life.