
Our Offering

The Importance of Attitude

The Value of our Offering

The Process of our Offering

Our Offering as Indemnity

Acceptance of our Offering

The Importance of Attitude

It is the heartfelt expression of love which you attach to your offering that makes the difference to God. No matter how small your result, make sure you offer it to Him. It is not necessary to go to extremes—to stand in the middle of the street and begin to pray or chant. That is not the point. You can take even a simple glass of water and share it with your Heavenly Father through a silent, "Thank-you." Offering every thought and action is not easy, but try to go through a day consciously doing that. For instance, take a small moment to begin your work day with a prayer of humility, and a feeling of gratitude that you have the chance to serve God's dispensation in some way—regardless of the actual work you perform. Just as important is that you end your day by offering it to God. If you are extremely tired, a short prayer will do; it is the attitude God observes, not the clock. One of our Holy Songs creates such a vivid image of God waiting at the "altar" for "an offering never made." How saddened He becomes when we fail to thank Him for whatever was achieved.

We will lose the hours we spend in prayer if we are not sincere enough or we approach God with an incorrect attitude when we pray. Such an impure offering cannot be accepted by God. We must make sure that every time we pray, we present ourselves before God in repentance, and with the attitude of thankfulness. Strive to make your attitude pure and divine.

The work we do each day should be offered to God. The offerings we make in such a way help to mediate, to bridge the gap that exists between us and God. The Bible records that Cain and Abel both brought offerings to God; God accepted the offering of Abel, but rejected the one made by Cain. Any offering we make should be brought with the right attitude. When you come home in the evening with a bad attitude, it is as if you throw away the effort you expended during the day, as well as the results which were gained. The world unseen is governed by love, and even now we prepare to live there. We should live life with the right attitude, and in the spirit of love!

Little things count. The little actions and gestures we make are sym-

bolic of our general attitude. It may seem like a small thing, but try to push your heart in the forefront of whatever you do, out of respect to God. God is much more advanced than we are; He will acknowledge such an action immediately. Spirit world is also far ahead of us. Spiritual beings detect the tiniest things—both the good *and* the bad. Before a thought even manifests, it is already either acknowledged or rejected.

God asked Abraham to make an offering. The first thing he should have done was pray. In his prayer, he should have proclaimed to God that he was going to follow His direction, as well as beseech God to receive his offering. He should have approached God with a clear heart, with sincerity, and the proper attitude. He was the representative of mankind, and hence should have asked that God accept his offering to serve as a point of mediation between God and man. If he would have felt that his offering had great historical importance, I can imagine he would have taken his knife and cut each animal very carefully. He would have planned how to orchestrate the offering, thinking what to do first, next, and so on. God surely would have revealed to him how to make his offering acceptable.

If Abraham would have had the right attitude, he would have never made his historic mistake. His thinking was too narrow because he concentrated most of his effort on cutting the bigger animals in two, and hence he did not have his priorities completely straight. Although the Bible does not explain the reason *why* Abraham did not cut the birds in two, we know that God was displeased because Abraham did not finish the job of making the sacrifices. Abraham did not understand the significance of the sacrifice he was offering. Nor could he comprehend that the relevance of cutting the animals in two was literally to drain the blood from the animals, and bring about a symbolic separation between good and evil. Because Abraham failed to have a pure attitude or to sanctify his offering, Satan could claim it instead of God.

Sometimes we don't look upon the details to be as important as the goal itself. But by neglecting to take care of them we often make our mistakes. We have to realize what our priorities are, as well as be sure to finish the job of making our offering. Of course it is important to reach the goal, but fulfilling the details represents the steps we take toward it.

Even today we Unificationists do not always understand the significance of the "small birds" we must cut. But we should learn a lesson from Abraham's failure. God directly asked Abraham to do something, but His direction was not followed. How often are *we* like Abraham?—Too often? Father asks us to do something, and yet we don't necessarily unite completely with his direction. We may not always pray deeply before we undertake a

new venture or even a new mission. We may fail to remember that in some way, the destiny of mankind rests upon our shoulders. Abraham might have been unaware that such a small decision as not cutting the birds, would have resulted in such devastating consequences. Too often we fail to realize how crucial our attitude is; we have to see from Abraham's life that historic decisions made by those who fulfill the positions of central figures in God's dispensation often become historic mistakes. We also must keep in mind that each one of us is a "central figure."

I remember an offering I made that was completely unacceptable to God, but one which taught me a great lesson. I did a seven day fast and felt so hungry that three or four hours before my fast ended, I assembled a huge feast that I planned to devour. At the magic moment that signified the end of my fast, I sat down and after the first bite, I got sick. God showed me that was not the way to do it.

We should be making offerings to God every day—in prayer, in work, and even through our everyday conversations. Yet it is the attitude we present them with that ultimately determines if they can be accepted by God. If we do things just to kill some time or because everybody else does them, yet our mind and body are not completely united, He may not be able to claim our offering.

We should focus on doing things *for* God. Having the right attitude means seeing the situation with the eyes of God, and feeling with His heart. We cultivate the right attitude when we do something for the sake of God and True Parents, and because we desire to help save the world. We Unificationists have been blessed with so many resources to tap—for example, an unlimited God, the Principle, and Father's words. We have so many opportunities to discover how to restore the mistakes of attitude made by people in the past, and how to develop the correct attitude with which to make our offerings.

The Value of our Offering

It is when we experience a total harmony within ourselves—a total freedom of heart and a complete willingness to sacrifice—that our offering becomes valuable to God.

When husband and wife totally unite spiritually and physically, and then center upon God rather than themselves, their love becomes an offering to God and acceptable to Him. In fact, that is the way God Himself is able to experience love. Yet if people do not invite Him to participate in the love they express in even a simple kiss, they fail to make an offering of their love, and consequently He cannot fully share in it. Likewise, we can either offer the results of our work and share the gifts He bestows to us such as food, shelter, clothing, etc., or keep them for ourselves. Most people do not realize the necessity of making an offering to God. They do not offer Him a portion of the money they receive in payment for their work, and keep it exclusively for their own use. Tithing is an important Christian principle, but too often stays more of a concept to people than becomes a practice. God is not interested in dollars and cents, but in the heart with which we accept the gifts He gives to us. I am sure He is happy that His children can live well and that they put their talents and their material blessings to good use. But He would be able to bless the things He gives us if we would offer them back to Him in gratitude. They would then be sanctified. If we would also give *ourselves* in such a moment, asking God to use us as His channel, we too would be purified. He is unhappy that although so much is given to people, so little thanks is returned to Him. This attitude has caused Him sorrow since the beginning of human history. Although many people believe in God, most seem to live life apart from Him. It has become hard for people to recognize the presence of God in the experiences of their daily life. Since human history began, men and women loved one another but shut God out of that experience, never believing that He might want to be considered a participant. But He does! He originally purposed that each of His children would invite Him to share every thought and feeling with Him. But Satan instigated that same rule of thumb, and as his children, all mankind has done *his* bidding. If we don't knowingly invite Satan into our lives, he still marches right in and makes himself comfortable. That is why before we invite God into our heart, we must first cleanse it of impurities. We automatically invite Him when we consciously purify our heart. If we nurture a pleasant disposition, we invite love to live within our heart, and God is able to abide there.

By studying the nature of offerings made throughout history, and especially the offering of Heung Jin Nim, we can see that neither God nor Satan wants to accept a cheap offering. The more valuable the better. Jesus was the most valuable person in the universe, and the offering of his life meant everything; even Satan acknowledged it.

It is the value of the sacrifice that counts. Within the True Family, Heung Jin Nirn was the most important person next to the True Parents, as he was in the position of "Abel" among the True Children. He was supposed to inherit the position of Father, therefore, his life became the greatest and purest sacrifice, and his willingness to offer himself in Father's place gives the offering he made even greater significance.

We are not concerned with the quantity of offering, but the quality. God is not concerned with how many dollars we made, but rather our internal growth, the efforts we made, and the degree to which our heart was involved. He examines whether we did things such as suffering and shedding tears for Him or ourselves. He studies whether or not we were sincere.

An offering will be accepted if it is pure. You know when you are harmonious in spirit and body and when you are not. If you make an offering with a pure mind and sincere attitude and center it upon God and True Parents, you can be guaranteed that it has value, and is accepted by God.

The closer we climb to God and perfection, the more pure and valuable a sacrifice we become. Whatever we do on the higher level has much greater impact in restoring the entire world. Why regard yourself as small and insignificant?—you are worth infinitely more! Unificationists are asked to make an offering of their hearts and love to both God and humanity. This is what is expected of us.

If you do not follow the Principle, don't be surprised if you do not have much spiritual strength and power. Your offering of heart and prayer must be in unison with the physical offering you make. Before you approach God in prayer, analyze whether you feel in harmony with everyone else; if you are not, your offering of heart cannot be considered pure. Free yourself of grudges; put them on the side before offering a prayer to God.

Realize that if your offering was impure, Satan was the one who took it. Realize it is gone, and that you have to make a new one, restoring that failure.

Unificationists should become conscious of doing everything with God and through True Parents. We should refrain from thinking we are

super human and that great results were achieved because of *us*. Of course we were an integral part, but we were merely the channel, not the source. We have to clarify the real reason for any success. It is always because God either offers His love *to us* or *through us*.

God is the one who should tell us what offerings to make. God was the one who told Noah to build the ark, and the one who told Abraham what to sacrifice. Although those offerings had symbolic value, there was also something very literal about them.

Attitude and prayer are the factors most decisive in purifying our offering. Yet too often we do not remember this until it is too late. Daily life almost gets in the way of making a pure offering. We battle with Satan but often don't realize the tremendous amount of negative force that comes at us. Life seems miserable and sometimes sheer drudgery, so the thought of consciously purifying what we offer to God, too easily gets lost in the milieu. We forget the fact that we are involved in restoration and get caught up in the moment and in the small things. The laws of Satan's world have become so commonplace that we forget to abide by the rules of God's world, and we even forget that we are the ones helping True Parents build the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. We ignore the fact that all things must be sanctified for Him to be able to claim what we do as an offering. Sometimes we are not conscious of the fact that our words and deeds actually constitute an "offering," for to us, they simply comprise "life." This is why we often *repeat* rather than *restore* the failures made in the past.

In much the same way that Adam and Eve failed, we often don't fulfill our human responsibility. Likewise, we don't usually want to offer our sacrifice through the "Abel" figure or obey him. Just as Ham, we often view things from a self-centered perspective and don't regard the words of our "fathers" as good and meaningful. We may even be displeased with our father's "nakedness." Like Moses, we often "kill" another person—with words and actions—simply because we do not consider the consequences of our actions before we do them. We have the tendency to strike the "rock" twice in anger and dry up the spring of God's love to us, through any resentment we might feel. We often act like a faithless John the Baptist; even though we saw the sign of the dove, we carry on without actively giving testimony to the true son of God. The Bible portrays many examples of faithlessness which the Principle elucidates and mentions as lessons for us *not* to repeat. How do we restore them?—making ourselves

as an offering and obeying the word of God. In this age of modern technology in which sophistication and getting yourself "together" are emphasized, the idea of becoming like a sacrificial lamb might not seem too appealing, but to God, our willingness to be that kind of offering holds tremendous value.

One Bible story is particularly poignant in its expression of how God views offerings. It indicates how an extremely rich man gave a sizable sum of money at the temple and then thanked God for making him better than other people. An old woman slipped into the back of that same temple, and with a feeling of humility offered her last bit of money, admitting to God her remorse that it was all she had. Furthermore, she even asked Him to forgive her for making such a small offering. The Bible story goes on to explain that God views that old woman with much more love than He does the rich man. She offered everything she had in an attitude of true submission, while the rich man took the equivalent of a few cents from his fortune and gave it in a spirit of self-importance. God felt so comforted by the woman's offering, and probably even felt compassion that she had so little to give. God's heart is touched by pure offerings; we know this from Jesus' own words, "Blessed are the meek."

God must follow the spiritual laws when He sees the attitude with which we make our offering; He has the power to bestow much greater blessing to us, or of necessity, withhold His grace. We should never consider any kindness offered by God in terms of dollars and cents. We have to see the blessings given by Him in an entirely different way.

Someone who gives you a donation toward the work of our movement will surely receive some sort of blessing. That is spiritual law. When money is given to you as you fundraise, accept it with a humble attitude. Accept it on behalf of God. Encourage the feelings of gratitude in your heart to accompany whatever material goods you offer to God. You are the mediator—the way that person's offering is extended to God.

You may have such tremendous compassion for someone who gives you his last dollar, that you feel a compulsion to give *him* a donation. That is a perfectly normal feeling, one which first stirred in the heart of God. A person who gives you his last dollar makes a beautiful and pure offering; such an expression of goodwill touches Him. No doubt that person's heart was moved by God, therefore, if you reject that offering because you feel pity for the person, you actually deprive him of God's blessing. Don't deny him the chance to make a donation. When it is given with a pure heart, even a single dollar can have a deep and special meaning to God.

Perhaps the person unconsciously feels indebted to God and offers a little token of what he feels he owes Him. The person's heart or conscience is touched by the goodness of God, and he wants to show it in some tangible way, however little the actual amount. Tears might well up in your eyes when you witness how willingly a person gives, but don't interfere with the process of that person's reaching out to God. The token few dollars act as a mediator. If you feel deeply touched by such an expression, you might wish to take that particular money and make a separate offering of it when you arrive home, asking that a special blessing be granted to the giver.

Offer God whatever you receive. If you give a good performance, talk, lecture, or successfully complete any task, the first thing to do is to thank God that He was able to use you as a channel. If a person is really uplifted by the words you said and even comes to accept True Parents because of them, make sure that you turn around and give that glory to God. If someone gives you something to eat, offer God that food through your prayer. Whether they realize it or not, people actually offer something to God through you, so be especially appreciative on His behalf.

As long as you give with gratitude, God will accept your offering. If the amount is large or if it is little, put forth everything. Purify your attitude and say, "Father, this is all I have. Please take it." Be as sincere as that woman and you won't have to worry; your offering will surely be accepted.

We must understand how to make pure offerings to God. If our heart is divided and disconnected from God, then even if we were to die for His will, our offering would not have the highest value possible. That is why it is essential for us to cleanse our heart before making any offering. Our offering can be sanctified with humility and the spirit of thanksgiving. They are what will give it value in the eyes of God:

What offering has the most meaning to God? God is no longer interested in sacrifices of vegetation or animals. We of this age are called to give our heart and love—without reservation, without compromise.

The Process of our Offering

We do what we do for the sake of God and humanity; that is why our work has such value. Anything that you offer through True Parents will be accepted by God. Even the gratitude you feel for the challenges you face

and the problems you experience, should be connected to God by offering them through True Parents.

We often perform many small jobs and in the process work extremely hard, putting in long hours and great effort. Yet sometimes we make the mistake of not bringing the offering through Abel. Too often we simply forget that point. It is the "high priest" within you—your spirit and heart—and *not* your body—which must present results of your work to God. The body can go through the motions, but it is the attitude of heart that really counts. If you fail to either reflect upon God or pray before making your offering, or neglect to offer the results in gratitude, then no matter how exhausted you feel because of your hard work, that offering might not be acceptable to God.

Everything we do is an offering. We should offer our prayers, thoughts, feelings, efforts, and even our suffering to God. Yet everything must go through the proper mediator; that is why we pray in the name of True Parents. One point we should never neglect is to make our offering through them. Our offerings will be accepted when placed on the altar of the world by the Messiah. Father is the "high priest" who presents the offering to God.

Your offering is sanctified if you present it with the right attitude. The same is true when you receive an offering. You can desecrate an offering which God or anyone makes to you by not considering the meaning, and simply using it with little regard for its actual value, or forgetting to view it as a blessing from God.

Leaders should take care not to stain a pure offering made through the hard work of the members under them. They must also consider the blood, sweat, and tears which went into that offering, and present it to God accordingly.

Pray can bring all sorts of surprises. Work out the difficulties of your life of faith through prayer. Do you feel like a small child before our Eternal? Feeling your dependency upon Him, are you able to put aside both pride and your "grown-up" personality, and become the kind of child who pours out his heart and sheds tears, not too proud to express that

you are in need of your Heavenly Father's help? God is so touched by such a prayer He just has to respond. When the condition of your heart is right, God comes. Condition your heart and be ready to receive a blessing from God.

Our Offering as Indemnity

Many times the results we achieve are invisible ones. Those are the times when our efforts only plant seeds which blossom much later. Yet these seedlings *are* visible to the eyes of God. We ourselves don't always know what good the suffering was, or what significance our indemnity had. Suffering due to your own mistakes or ignorance, or someone else's stupidity, has no value. The same is true if you did things purely for personal gain. But suffering on behalf of humanity, for another person, and especially for God, is altogether different.

Putting tremendous energy into training yourself and achieving a certain goal so that you and your family may benefit from it, has little merit in building the Kingdom of Heaven. Yet training yourself and sacrificing your time to achieve certain goals which will help you become more qualified to work for God, has great virtue. We Unificationists desire to sacrifice ourselves as an offering to benefit humanity. Jesus is a prime example of someone who made such an offering; because he was the son of God, his life had much more value than any martyr. He gave himself purely and totally. From his example we can learn that a purified offering is most pleasing and is of greatest significance to God.

Humanity can be restored only if the most valuable offerings are made. Throughout history, the most important offerings have always been made by God's central figures. For example, God asked Abraham to offer his only son. Jesus was by far the greatest offering made by God. Through the sacrifice of his life, mankind had the chance to be saved. If Judas would have been offered in Jesus' place, the result would have been completely different, because he did not have the cosmic value before God or Satan that Jesus did.

The highest offerings must be brought before God, yet at the same time will be scintinized by Satan; Satan always tries to find a hole in our offering, rendering it impure in the eyes of God, and thereby allowing him to claim

it. Father has suffered untold misery to redeem mankind spiritually and physically, and has been tested by both God and Satan. Unificationists who have received the Blessing are urged to follow Father's pattern of suffering. By making pure offerings of ourselves, we work for the restoration of this world. The primary question is not how we as individuals or families prosper today, or even what we will do tomorrow or twenty years from now. The basic point is how we can serve with our life to restore humanity. Even though in the Pledge we recite, "I will fight with my life..." we often forget that through those very words we make a declaration, an offering. God is desperate that we make our deeds match our words, and we do that through offering conditions of indemnity.

Just as God asked Abraham to willingly surrender his only son, God asks us to offer something of great value—an "Isaac"—in our life of faith, too. It is important to give up something we hold dear in order to win a certain triumph over our satanic nature. We can see from Abraham's case that if our attitude is pure and we do this with resolve, then those dreams need only be shelved for awhile. Through personal experience, I know that once we are willing to surrender an "Isaac," God will find a way to return that very thing to us sometime in the future.

Life today is a matter of survival. Father is the one who understands most fully the importance of the principle of restoration through indemnity, and how mankind can survive. That is why he brings tremendous sacrifices before God. He offers the work and obedience of blessed couples, hoping these conditions are pure enough to be accepted by God and acknowledged by Satan. There is no question that Unificationists pay indemnity, but the important point is our attitude in doing it. Both God and Satan observe how we react to directions given by Father—how purely and humbly we follow them. Some of us think we have already done enough and it is time to settle down and map out our future. But if we don't continue to make a purified offering of our lives, will anyone finish this job which we started?

If we pray for the benefit of humanity, then humanity will definitely reap blessings. If we perform good deeds all day long and become successful in making pure offerings of them for the sake of the restoration of the world, Heavenly Father will be able to consider us as representatives

for millions of people, and as a result have the freedom to bestow blessings upon many more people. God sees how hard Unificationists work; His heart is softened by our attempts to work on behalf of humanity. This evokes more of His compassion, and He seeks ways to fill our empty hearts.

Think about what Jesus did. Mankind has been granted spiritual salvation because of the offering he made. Think of all that Father has done. We Unificationists are here today because we represent the fruit of the offerings made by him. The earliest members of the Unification movement had to pay much more indemnity than we do today, and their offering too has pardoned us from the need to make more stringent conditions of indemnity. Yet if we are willing to pay great amounts of indemnity for the millions and billions of people in the world, God's foundation will expand, and it will become much easier for people to accept True Parents. Even now many ministers seriously consider the possibility that Father could be the Messiah. Yet just twenty years ago, there was such tremendous and wholehearted resistance to that idea. Not enough indemnity was paid at that time. Not a large enough foundation existed.

God has chosen us to make offerings of ourselves and to act as mediators between Himself and all of humanity. It is we who must intervene on behalf of mankind. We have the power and the ability to beg for forgiveness of the people, because we do it in the name of True Parents. When we offer purified conditions of indemnity such as prayer, fasting, and hard work, we help their plight. Some of the struggle and suffering we endure by living a life of faith and serving the living Christ also creates indemnity, as does testifying to the glory of God.

Fallen people could surely consider physical life to be a burden. All of us want to feel relief, yet in addition to bearing the weight of everyday life, we accrue even more merit by willingly standing in for God and humanity. It is normal that we sometimes feel heavy-laden, but in a few years we will be amazed at the result that will come from the small input and tiny conditions and offerings we are making today.

Offering one's physical life is not an easy thing to do. Both God and the spirit world are invisible, so what guarantees does a person have that they really exist? If more people could be assured that by giving their life they would be saved and able to live with God and Jesus, they would surely do it. But there are no written guarantees, and many people won't bank on vague promises. Living a sacrificial life while battling Satan at the same time is difficult; a lot of people just refuse to take the chance that this is not the only life they have, so they focus on making this life as enjoyable and comfortable as possible. It is a tremendous job to die to yourself, to give

up all your dreams and instead offer your life to bring salvation to humanity. Yet this is just the type of offering which has value to God.

We are called to suffer for humanity. Superficiality has no place in our lives. We need to become deeper both in our faith and character. We need to learn how to love. The discrepancies we notice in someone's personality may anger us, but we should not allow that emotion to dominate us; instead we should replace it with compassion. We should suffer along with that person out of the desire to help him. If we come close to God and feel His heart, we will be able to detect the anguish and emptiness experienced by many other people. That is the kind of attitude which can even defeat Satan. To give our physical life to defend the nation and its honor is one thing, but making a total offering of our spiritual life is entirely different.

Anyone who is self-centered need not apply for the job of offering his life for humanity, for it is doubtful he could succeed. Unificationists have been called to become an offering on the universal altar—presenting heart, body, and soul. The whole world, including Satan, is witness to our commitment, to the pledge that we make. Analyze your commitment. Could other people testify that you give yourself totally?

It is not enough just to stay in the background and look like a saint; a real saint has to *act* like one! Did you ever consciously wonder, "What do I really have to offer the world? Where is the light Jesus told us not to hide? Do I radiate a spiritual glow? How can I shine out to and encourage the people around me? How can I cheer God up?" God is intimately involved in our lives. He looks at our physical and spiritual countenances and can detect how well we are harmonized within ourselves. Many people do the same thing. They try to size us up by what we look like, by the language we use, and the amount and quality of our material possessions. They form a certain opinion of us based on how we appear to them. I am sure you are no different in that you probably also appraise people by what they project, and hold a certain impression of them based on that. When you meet a person you may intuitively feel how genuine and good a person he is, yet until he begins to speak, you cannot be certain what he is really like or what goes on inside him. There are many breathtakingly beautiful women in this world. There are many awesomely handsome men. But once they begin to talk, you may become disappointed if you discover they don't have such deep character. They may speak primarily about very superficial things, causing you to realize that their beauty really is only "skin deep."

All of us want to find people with charismatic personalities who can light up the dark corners of our lives. We look for people who can offer us a respite in our difficult times. We research the way people communicate with us—the vibrations they project, whether or not they extend their hand to or bow to us, their facial expressions, but especially what they speak from their heart, and the language and tone of voice they use. Yet we are aware that we are being "judged" by them, and we eagerly await their response. We want to know: Am I beautiful, am I not? Do you think I'm good, or do you consider me a bad person? While we wait for approval, our mind might race through thousands of possible answers, yet at the same time we could be building inferiority complexes in our mind: Oh no, my shoes are dirty. My coat is missing a button. I wonder if my hair looks alright. What is he going to think? I forgot to shave!

By listening to what the other person communicates to us both in words and through his facial expressions and body language, we can learn a lot about how we measure up to that person's standards, and even those held by society. If we find that the image we project is not the best it could be, we can choose to make it better by striving for greater mind-body unity, and by extending more heart and love to those we meet. There are a great many facets to the idea of "offering."

It is the little things, the small conditions of indemnity we offer which make all the difference. The way we handle the details of life determines in large part how we will handle the larger goals.

Acceptance of our Offering

Every offering we make should be consecrated; that will enable God to accept it. Before making an offering, we should pray in order to purify it. Furthermore, unless we make our offerings to God in the name of True Parents, He is powerless to accept them. Satan, however, is all too happy to claim them. Part of our responsibility is to make sure Satan does not invade our conditions. Everything in this world bears the mark of Satan, therefore, we must obliterate the satanic stain from whatever we offer. Furthermore, we must exercise caution as we make our offering—especially taking care of our thoughts and feelings. Even a momentary "slip" into negativity could be a strong enough base to allow Satan to claim our sacrifice. Before we attempt to make an offering, we ourselves have to be separated from

Satan. Our mind and body must be in harmony with the will of God, and aware of what we are doing. We must invest our heart as well as our intellect, and then go one step further. For our offering to be acceptable to God, we must divide the "Cain" and "Abel" within us—our evil from our good nature. Unless we do that, Satan has a base to invade our offering and us. If that happens, the suffering we might undergo may not be as difficult as that which the Israelites had to bear, nonetheless, any torment from Satan is unpleasant.

Have you ever experienced this? You were in the process of offering an indemnity condition, and were very determined to purify it. Something went wrong and you didn't *quite* complete your condition, but you thought the slip-up of that one little detail probably didn't matter so much. Unfortunately, it did. Such a tiny hole gave Satan the chance and the right to claim your offering. You did *almost* everything right. Like Abraham, you just forgot to cut and drain the last little bit of "blood" from your "birds." You felt a certain pride, thinking that you had done so very well, but suddenly out of nowhere, a deluge of negativity and anger hit you. It is because evil spirits, who were poised and watching—those "birds of prey"—caught the fact that you missed doing something, and thereby could swoop down and claim your offering on behalf of Satan.

Because this world is so filled with negative elements, we often don't recognize Satan's infiltration. He is *so* subtle. We cannot always discern how to make God the center of our lives or how to consecrate every offering we make. This world is so tainted with evil that we tend to see things through the opaque veneer constructed by Satan, and no longer see the vivid colors originally used by God when He painted the creation. God is desperate to restore this sinful world. Yet He cannot claim either physical or spiritual things from under Satan's rule. Man must do that for Him. True Parents have been so exemplary in the sacrifice and offerings they make to God. God hopes that we would learn lessons from them which we could apply in our own lives of faith. The Principle explains the mistakes Abraham and Moses made in the offerings they gave to God. These too should serve as a teaching device for us.

Let us strive to do our absolute best at *all* times. If we have given our "all" and yet did not succeed in bringing the greatest result in terms of numbers or dollar amount, our offering will still be accepted. But people who often fall short in making an offering—spiritually or materially—should analyze why and then determine whether or not they are really connected to God, or still have too many strings tying them to Satan.

Even if he did not recognize it, the offering made by Abraham was of major significance. Both God and Satan watched what Abraham did. The Bible explains that because Abraham failed to cut the birds in two, birds of prey took the carcasses, desecrating the entire offering. The symbolism is clarified through the Principle: the "Cain" and "Abel" elements of these animals were not separated, and God was still not able to claim humanity.

Complaints are made directly and indirectly. There are the inaudible ones that start in your mind, as well as ones such as muttering under your breath, the roll of your eyes to the heavens, the stomping and pounding of your foot or fist, and the hardening of your heart—all of them can be "viewed" as a form of protest or grievance. They seem just part of life and as natural as breathing, but they represent so much more. If all such actions made on a particular day were added together, you would probably discover that your work was unable to be claimed by God. Complaints are representative of an impure and stained attitude. Satan has a field day when we bemoan our situation. God continues to reach out to us, wanting to gather up our efforts and add them to the stockpile of ammunition He is amassing to use during His constant battles with Satan. But those are the days His arms are empty, and His eyes wet with tears from disappointment and frustration.

Based on the sacrifice of Jesus, spiritual liberation is granted by God to those who believe in the resurrection. Despite our belief in the resurrected Jesus, the law of the flesh is so dominant; our physical body is not totally liberated simply because we believe. A *total* restoration can occur only if our original sin is forgiven. No matter how much we do not want to sin, mankind is still chained to Satan through the original sin. Our spirit wants to do many things, but our body often becomes a treacherous enemy and does everything possible to prevent this; our spirit must come to dominate our body, or we could be led to spiritual ruin.

That is why the spiritual and physical worlds must be united. Every person must achieve total harmony between his spirit and body. Our spirit almost cries out in jubilation that we want to give our life to God, but the next moment our physical body is lured and coaxed to sin by giving in to some temptation planted by Satan. That is also the time Satan might haughtily remind you of the promise you made to God, and then accuse you of being a hypocrite. He sees that you promise to act like an angel, but end up

acting like a "devil." Both God and Satan have very watchful eyes—keen and sensitive to our every move.

Then what is the meaning of "offering?" You "offered" God that desire, yet Satan pounced upon and stole it. The attitude with which we make an offering is of utmost importance; that is the decisive factor. It is what determines whether God or Satan has the right to take it.

God will never share an offering with Satan. If you compromise, you also fail to divide your offering, which then gives Satan the opportunity to invade, and prevents God from touching it. You may have done a condition of fasting, but if Satan was able to "invade" you—your thoughts and your heart—during that time, your condition went to him, not God. Make sure that whatever you do, you purify your sacrifice. Make sure you offer it with a clean heart, a pure attitude, and sincerity. Make sure it is only for God.

We can see the great consequences that resulted because Abraham's offering was not purified. To human eyes, the mistake Abraham made seems so small and insignificant. Yet that mistake was monumental, of great historic importance. It is nearly impossible to imagine that the Israelites had to suffer four hundred years simply because Abraham failed to cut some birds in half. It doesn't seem logical or feasible that an almighty God would allow this, but we must realize that God was not the only one involved. Satan calculated Abraham's moves and at the same time watched God very carefully, observing if both God and mankind followed the laws of God, or whether mankind would abide by Satan's own "laws." Satan knows his own power and how much he and his agents influence this world to sin. He knows it is difficult for man to exert enough spiritual strength to balk against his will. He has seen how painstakingly God created condition after condition in order to lay claim to even small things. And he has been delighted when man was either ignorant or not mindful of how important it is to make *pure* offerings so neither time nor effort spent by God to erect a foundation is lost. He cannot help but notice how frustrated God has been because of our weak will and innocence about Satan's crafty ways. God has tried to enlighten mankind through a burning bush, a booming voice, and especially the words of Jesus and True Father. He needs us to understand how to tell the difference between good and evil.

Our God—our unlimited reservoir—has so much love and countless blessings stored up. He wants mankind to receive them all. Making an offering is serious business. It is how we are able to turn on the tap!