

The image features two thick black L-shaped brackets. One is positioned in the top-left corner, and the other is in the bottom-right corner. They are oriented towards each other, framing the central text.

# DEDICATION OR GIVING BACK

■ Psalm 127:3-5 Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him. 4 Children born to a young man are like arrows in a warrior's hands. 5 How joyful is the man whose quiver is full of them! He will not be put to shame when he confronts his accusers at the city gates. NLT

- *As parents do we recognize our children are a precious gift from the Lord, and they belong ultimately and always to God first—not to you?*
- *Have we released ownership of our children to Him—understanding God is responsible for the way in which they were designed and already knows the plan and purpose for their future?*
- *Understand God has left it up to you to show them His way?*

- Is there a difference between dedicating our children or “BRING OUR CHILDREN AND PUT THEM ON THE ALTAR!”

- BIBLICAL EXAMPLES:

- There are many examples of parents in the Bible who brought their children to God and gave them back to Him:

- Hannah bringing her son Samuel (the son for whom she had prayed), and presenting him to God, and handing young Samuel over to Eli the priest.

- *1 Samuel 1:24-28* When the child was weaned, Hannah took him to the Tabernacle in Shiloh. They brought along a three-year-old bull for the sacrifice and a basket of flour and some wine. 25 After sacrificing the bull, they brought the boy to Eli. 26 "Sir, do you remember me?" Hannah asked. "I am the woman who stood here several years ago praying to the Lord. 27 I asked the Lord to give me this boy, and he has granted my request. 28 Now I am giving him to the Lord, and he will belong to the Lord his whole life." And they worshiped the Lord there. NLT

- Joseph and Mary brought the infant child Jesus to the temple:
  - *Joseph and Mary brought the infant child Jesus to the temple: Luke 2:21-24 Eight days later, when the baby was circumcised, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel even before he was conceived. 22 Then it was time for their purification offering, as required by the law of Moses after the birth of a child; so his parents took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. 23 The law of the Lord says, "If a woman's first child is a boy, he must be dedicated to the Lord." 24 So they offered the sacrifice required in the law of the Lord—"either a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."*
  
- Abraham offering Isaac on Mt. Moriah.
  - *Gen 22:1-18 Some time later, God tested Abraham's faith. "Abraham!" God called. "Yes," he replied. "Here I am." 2 "Take your son, your only son—yes, Isaac, whom you love so much—and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you."*

- 3 The next morning Abraham got up early. He saddled his donkey and took two of his servants with him, along with his son, Isaac. Then he chopped wood for a fire for a burnt offering and set out for the place God had told him about. 4 On the third day of their journey, Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. 5 "Stay here with the donkey," Abraham told the servants. "The boy and I will travel a little farther. We will worship there, and then we will come right back."
- 6 So Abraham placed the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac's shoulders, while he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them walked on together, 7 Isaac turned to Abraham and said, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "We have the fire and the wood," the boy said, "but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?" 8 "God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering, my son," Abraham answered. And they both walked on together.

- 9 When they arrived at the place where God had told him to go, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. Then he tied his son, Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood. 10 And Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice. 11 At that moment the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, "Abraham! Abraham!" "Yes," Abraham replied. "Here I am!" 12 "Don't lay a hand on the boy!" the angel said. "Do not hurt him in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from me even your son, your only son."
- 13 Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son. 14 Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh (which means "the Lord will provide"). To this day, people still use that name as a proverb: "On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided." NLT

- Abraham literally, totally, irrevocably gave Isaac back to God. Man, that had to be hard and painful for Abraham.
  - *Think about the context of this:*
  - *Abraham loved Isaac. God said, “Take your son, your only son, whom you love, and sacrifice him ...”*
  - *Isaac had been a MIRACLE baby. He was born when Sarah was 90 and Abraham was 100 years of age.*
  - *Try for just a moment and put yourself in Abraham’s place.*
  
- Think about what was already stated from the passage in Psalms:
  - *As parents do we recognize our children are a precious gift from the Lord, and they belong ultimately and always to God first—not to you?*
  - *Have we released ownership of our children to Him—understanding God is responsible for the way in which they were designed and already knows the plan and purpose for their future?*
  
- Those statements probably sounded fine until I shared what happened when Abraham was put to the test!

- **Do you know—the best thing Abraham ever did for Isaac was to tie him to that altar and to surrender him back to God?**
- Had Abraham refused to give Isaac back to God, he probably would have forfeited all God's promises and plans for Isaac. Isaac may have lived and died in obscurity—a nomad, and a nobody.
- Because Abraham obeyed and gave Isaac back to God, Isaac received the fullness of God's best plan and promise for his life:
  - *Isaac became a wealthy man.*
  - *Isaac became the forefather of God's own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.*
  - *Isaac's life is still having an impact on and blessing millions of people worldwide through his offspring—Jesus Christ.*
- And so, you and I need to learn from Abraham today. If we refuse and fail to give our children back to God—we may very well be forfeiting God's best plan and purpose for their lives. And when we entrust our children back to God—we secure for them the covenant of God's best purpose and plan for their lives.

# ■ FOUR ELEMENTS OF GIVING YOUR CHILD BACK TO GOD:

1. Giving your child to God is a CONFIRMATION of your love for God.
  - *The first thing you are saying when you give that child back to the Lord is simply this...that you love God even more than you love that child. (Your child is a most prized possession...but don't allow them to take the place of God!)*
  - *I love you, child, so much, that I want the very best for you. If that means giving you to God, spanking you, giving you limitations (holding the line), changing my life for your benefit...I'll do whatever it takes!]*
  - *This is exactly what Abraham proved by his willingness to offer Isaac. He was demonstrating that his love and fear of God were supreme in his life above all else.*
    - Abraham loved God above the most prized treasure of his life...his only son Isaac.
  - *Matt 10:37-39 "If you love your father or mother more than you love me, you are not worthy of being mine; or if you love your son or daughter more than me, you are not worthy of being mine. 38 If you refuse to take up your cross and follow me, you are not worthy of being mine. 39 If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will find it. NLT*

## 2. Giving your children to God is a CLARIFICATION of ownership.

- *When you give your child back to God, you are openly declaring that:*
  - This child is a gift from God.
  - This child does not really belong to you.
  - This child belongs to God.
    - *(You have the privilege to love and train this child. But this child is not yours—but God’s!)*
- *Was this not what had to be on Abraham’s mind when he lay Isaac on the altar? Was he not saying, “Lord, this young man belongs to you—not me?” He was saying, “You do with him as you please. He’s yours!”*
- *We really can’t be sure what Abraham, but we know he didn’t seem to hesitate to do what God told him to do!*
- *God did not authorize anyone to raise the child he has given to you but you!*

### 3. Giving Your Children to God Is A COMMITMENT to Raise Your Children God's Way!

- *Ephesians 6:4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.*
- *To give your child to God is not just a CEREMONY...It is a COMMITMENT. It is a commitment that you are going to:*
  - Be a Godly parent. (Parent dedication...requires getting right w/ God)
  - Teach this child of Christ. (You want them to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior)
  - Keep your child connected to the church. (You are dedicating them in a service with the anticipation the church will assist and encourage you in the raising and training of them.)
  - Love this child. (even if loving them means disciplining them/letting God discipline you!)
  - Pray for this child.
  - Train this child.
  - Make your home a holy place.
  - Be a godly example to you children. (They may not always listen to you but they will imitate you!)

- *Baby dedication isn't a magical ceremony. This ceremony will probably mean nothing—zero—if you are not making a sincere, life-long commitment to raise this child God's way!*
- *Joshua 24:14-15 "So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord alone. 15 But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord."*

#### 4. Giving Your Children To God is a CLAIMING of God's plan and promises for that child's life.

- *2 Tim 1:9 For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus. NLT*

- *Isaac inherited God's blessings, protection and promises because his dad, Abraham, gave him back to God.*
- *Genesis 22:15-18 Then the angel of the Lord called again to Abraham from heaven. 16 "This is what the Lord says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by my own name that 17 I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies. 18 And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me."*
- *As you obey God with your life, and as you give that child back to God, you are posturing that child to receive God's very best for his/her life.*

- To summarize this is what it means to give your children back to God:
  - *It is a CONFIRMATION of your supreme love for Christ.*
  - *It is a CLARIFICATION of ownership (God owns that child).*
  - *It is a COMMITMENT to raise that child under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.*
  - *It is a CLAIMING of God's best plan and promises for that child's life.*
  
- This is exactly what transpired when Abraham took Isaac up Mt. Moriah and laid him on the altar to give him to God.
  - *Abraham was CONFIRMING his love and fear of Jehovah.*
  - *Abraham was CLARIFYING that Isaac really belonged to God.*
  - *Abraham was COMMITTING to be a Godly parent.*
  - *Abraham was CLAIMING God's plan and promises for Isaac.*

## ■ One last thing:

■ Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it. ESV

## ■ Laying hold of the promise:

- *Put your child's name in the verse and make it personal!*
- *Speak it out!*
- *Spread it out before the Lord*
- *Have others agree with you in prayer*
- *Never, Never, Never Give Up!!!! Winston Churchill*