

Elder Neal A. Maxwell: Real Sacrifice⁸⁹⁷

... [R]eal, personal sacrifice never was placing an animal on the altar. Instead, it is a willingness to put the animal in us upon the altar and letting it be consumed! Such is the “sacrifice unto the Lord... of a broken heart and a contrite spirit,”⁸⁹⁸ a prerequisite to taking up the cross, while giving “away all [our] sins” in order to “know God,”⁸⁹⁹ for the denial of self precedes the full acceptance of Him.

Elder Bruce C. Hafen: Sacrifice of a Broken Heart and a Contrite Spirit⁹⁰⁰

To lay claim to the Savior’s sacrifice, we, like Adam and Eve, must also obey and sacrifice. We must bring an offering that in some way approximates his own suffering—the sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit.⁹⁰¹

The Savior’s completion of His Atonement changed the nature of the law of sacrifice in a way that requires that our hearts be broken. Formerly, the Old Testament’s law of sacrifice required literal animal sacrifices and burnt offerings. But after the Atonement fulfilled the law of Moses, Jesus explained to the Nephites that they should do away with animal sacrifices. Henceforth, He taught that whoever would come unto him with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, He would baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost.⁹⁰²

Elder James E. Talmage believed that the physiological cause of Christ’s death was, literally, a broken heart.⁹⁰³ This element in our Lord’s sacrifice suggests two differences between animal sacrifices and the sacrifice of a broken heart. First is the difference between offering one of our possessions, such as an animal, and offering our own hearts. Second, one who offers an unblemished animal, the firstling of a flock, acts in similitude of the Father’s sacrifice of his unblemished, firstborn Son. By contrast, one who offers his own broken heart acts in similitude of the Son’s terribly personal sacrifice of Himself. Thus, the figurative breaking of our own hearts, represented by our repentance and our faithful endurance of the mortal crucible—our own taste of a bitter cup—is a self-sacrifice that mirrors the Savior’s own self-sacrifice. He is the Father’s, and we are His. The Father is in Him, and He is in us.⁹⁰⁴ Perhaps, in this sense only, those whose sacrificial attitude resembles His, even if only slightly, are prepared to be endowed with his grace.

In this sacrificial spirit, the righteous Saints who belong to the Holy One of Israel are those who have endured the crosses of the world and despised the shame of it.⁹⁰⁵ These are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God and whose joy shall be full forever.⁹⁰⁶

897 N. A. Maxwell, *Deny*, p. 68.

898 D&C 59:8.

899 Alma 22:18.

900 B. C. Hafen, *Broken*, p. 32.

901 See, e.g., D&C 59:8.

902 3 Nephi 9:19-20.

903 J. E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, ch. 35 n. 8, pp. 620-621. See also W. R. Litchfield, *Search*.

904 See John 17:21.

905 See Hebrews 12:2, 2 Nephi 9:18.

906 See 2 Nephi 9:18.