

The Sacrifice

In 2005, two Marine officers arrived at the home of Ken and Ruth Mortenson with the announcement that their son, Marty, had been killed in action in al-Ramadi, Iraq. He was one of 4,497 lives lost in Iraq as of April 30, 2021. Many people asked the Mortensons how they could survive the loss of a child. The Mortensons chose to address the loss of their son through their faith rather than joining the public outcry as the number of deaths in the conflict climbed.

The Sacrifice, is written in three parts. Ruth first introduces us to Marty and their experience in raising their son. In the second part of the narrative, she relates the story of Abraham and God's command to sacrifice his son, Isaac. Though Isaac is spared at the last moment, the lesson in the story of Abraham and Isaac is one of trust. Learning to trust God in all things is a key element in this story of Biblical-based faith and in the Mortensons' memoir.

In the last part of the account, Ruth discusses how she and her husband each worked through their grief and the lessons they learned about loss, about trust and faith. Her account offers comfort to those who have lost a family member or a friend they deeply love. The phrase, 'freedom isn't free', is frequently used with the significance fading into a sea of words. There is a cost for our freedom, whether in our national interest or for an individual caught in a cycle of grief and sin. The Mortensons understand a little of that cost and know that God offers us comfort and freedom through the life of his Son.



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