

Scriptures June 28, 2026

Modern Testimony

"Invitation" by Mary Oliver

*Oh do you have time
to linger
for just a little while
out of your busy*

*and very important day
for the goldfinches
that have gathered
in a field of thistles*

*for a musical battle,
to see who can sing
the highest note,
or the lowest,*

*or the most expressive of mirth,
or the most tender?
Their strong, blunt beaks
drink the air*

*as they strive
melodiously
not for your sake
and not for mine*

*and not for the sake of winning
but for sheer delight and gratitude –
believe us, they say,
it is a serious thing*

*just to be alive
on this fresh morning
in the broken world.
I beg of you,*

*do not walk by
without pausing
to attend to this
rather ridiculous performance.*

*It could mean something.
It could mean everything.
It could be what Rilke meant, when he wrote:
You must change your life.*

~silence is kept~

Ancient Testimony

Genesis 22:1-14 NRSV

The testing of Abraham

The Command to Sacrifice Isaac

22 After these things God tested Abraham. He said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' ² He said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt-offering on one of the mountains that I shall show you.' ³ So Abraham rose early in the morning, saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and his son Isaac; he cut the wood for the burnt-offering, and set out and went to the place in the distance that God had shown him. ⁴ On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place far away. ⁵ Then Abraham said to his young men, 'Stay here with the donkey; the boy and I will go over there; we will worship, and then we will come back to you.' ⁶ Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering and laid it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. ⁷ Isaac said to his father Abraham, 'Father!' And he said, 'Here I am, my son.' He said, 'The fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?' ⁸ Abraham said, 'God himself will provide the lamb for a burnt-offering, my son.' So the two of them walked on together.

⁹ When they came to the place that God had shown him, Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order. He bound his son Isaac, and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. ¹⁰ Then Abraham reached out his hand and took the knife to kill^[a] his son. ¹¹ But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, and said, 'Abraham, Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' ¹² He said, 'Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me.' ¹³ And Abraham looked up and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns. Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt-offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ So Abraham called that place 'The Lord will provide';^[b] as it is said to this day, 'On the mount of the Lord it shall be provided.'^[c]

Ancient Testimony

Matthew 10:40-42 NRSV

Welcome Christ in those Christ sends

Rewards

⁴⁰ 'Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. ⁴¹ Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; ⁴² and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.'