

RAYMOND'S RAISING inspired from Judges 3:15-23, 30

The city of Westbrook had become a place where people felt defeated. Crime was increasing, businesses were closing, and many families were struggling. People complained about the problems, but few were willing to step forward and help.



Among them was a quiet young man named Raymond. He worked at a community center, helping children after school. Most people saw him as ordinary, but those closest to him knew he had a heart for serving others.

One afternoon, Raymond sat with his friends Bobby and Jimmy outside the community center.

"Have you noticed how everyone just talks about the problems?" Bobby asked. "Nobody wants to do anything."

Jimmy nodded. "People are waiting for someone else to step up."

Raymond looked across the neighborhood. "Maybe people are waiting because they don't believe one person can make a difference."

Bobby chuckled. "And do you?"

Raymond smiled. "I think one person can start something that changes everything."

Over the next few years, Raymond felt a growing burden to help his community. He organized food drives, mentored teenagers, cleaned abandoned lots, and spoke up for families who needed support. What began as small acts of service slowly inspired others to join him.

One day, a serious crisis hit Westbrook. Funding for important community programs was about to be cut. Without those programs, many young people would lose safe places to go after school.

People panicked.

At a town meeting, the room was filled with worried voices.



"We're going to lose everything!"

"Nobody is listening to us!"

"What can we do?"

Raymond stood up.

"We can do something," he said confidently.

The room fell silent.

"We don't have to accept defeat... we'll meet with the city leaders... we'll present a plan... we'll show them why these programs matter."

An older resident shook her head.

"Do you really think they'll listen?"

Raymond replied, "If we speak with wisdom, preparation, and courage, they will have no choice but to hear us."

After the meeting, Bobby pulled Raymond aside.

"That's a huge challenge."

Jimmy agreed. "A lot of people are counting on you now."

Raymond nodded.

"I know. But this isn't about me. It's about helping people who need someone to stand for them."

For weeks, Raymond worked tirelessly. He gathered evidence, organized volunteers, and prepared presentations. Bobby helped coordinate community outreach while Jimmy collected stories from families whose lives had been changed by the programs.

Finally, the day came.

Raymond stood before city officials and presented a clear vision for the future of Westbrook. He spoke with confidence and integrity.



When he finished, the room was quiet.

Then one of the leaders spoke.

"Mr. Raymond, you've given us something we haven't seen before."

"What's that?" Raymond asked.

"A solution."

Several weeks later, the city announced that not only would the programs remain open, but additional resources would be invested in the community.

The news spread quickly.

The neighborhood celebrated.

Children cheered in the community center, while parents hugged one another, and volunteers gathered to thank Raymond.

Bobby grinned. "You did it."

Jimmy nodded. "The city is changing because you refused to quit."

Raymond shook his head.

"We did it together. I was just willing to answer the call."

Years later, people still talked about that moment. Westbrook experienced a season of growth, peace, and opportunity. New programs flourished, businesses returned, and hope replaced discouragement.

MOVING A HEAD

One evening, as they reflected on everything that had happened, Bobby asked, "Did you ever imagine all this when we sat outside this building years ago?"

Raymond smiled.

"No. But I learned something important."

"What's that?" Jimmy asked.

Raymond looked at the thriving neighborhood around him.

"When people cry out for help, God often raises up ordinary people to become deliverers. The difference is not who they are. The difference is whether they're willing to step forward when the time comes."

And just as God raised up Ehud to deliver Israel in Judges 3, He had raised up Raymond to bring hope, courage, and change to his community. Because one person answered the call, many others found peace, and the community enjoyed years of blessing and stability.