

Legacy

הָאֵיל בָּא אַחֲרוֹן The ram came last
וְלֹא יָדַע אַבְרָהָם כִּי הוּא nor did Abraham know it was
מְשִׁיב לְשֵׁאלַת הַיֶּלֶד, the answer the question of the boy,
רֵאשִׁית-אוֹנוֹ בְּעֵת יוֹמוֹ עָרַב. his first strength in his waning day.

נִשָּׂא רֵאשׁוֹ הַשֶּׁבַב. The old man raised head.
בְּרֵאוֹתָיו כִּי לֹא חָלַם חֲלוֹם When he saw that he was not dreaming
וְהַמַּלְאָךְ נָצַב- that the angel stood firm-
נִשְׂרָה הַמַּאֲכָלֶת מִיָּדוֹ. The knife fell from his hand.

הַיֶּלֶד שֶׁהִתַּר מֵאֲסוּרָיו The boy, freed from his bonds,
רָאָה אֶת גֵּב אָבִיו. saw his father's back.

יִצְחָק, כְּמִסְפָּר, לֹא הֶעֱלָה קֶרְבָּנוֹ. Isaac, as the story is told, was not sacrificed.
הוּא חֵי יָמִים רַבִּים, He lived a long life,
רָאָה בְּטוֹב, עַד אוֹר עֵינָיו כָּהָה. saw the good, until his eyes dimmed.

אָבֵל אֶת הַשְּׁעָה הֵהִיא הוֹרִישׁ לְצִאֲצָאָיו. But that hour he bequeathed to his descendants.
הֵם נוֹלָדִים They are born
וּמֵאֲכָלֶת בְּלִבָּם. with a knife in their hearts.

Hayyim Gouri, "Legacy"

Translated by Rabbi Steven Sager