



# The Best is yet to Come



Once upon a time, about four hundred years after Noah got off the ark, there was a very old shepherd whose name was Abraham. Abraham loved God and believed God. God had promised Abraham a son, and when Abraham was one hundred years old, he had a son named Isaac. God had promised the old shepherd that the entire world would one day be blessed through the life and descendants of Isaac.

But one morning, God asked that same shepherd to do a VERY hard thing. "Abraham, Abraham, take your only son Isaac, whom you love, to a mountain I will show you and offer him there as an offering to me.

Now you and I don't talk about sacrifices and offerings very much anymore, but what God had just asked Abraham to do was to build a pile of rocks, lay Isaac on the rocks, kill him, and then burn him as an offering to God.

Abraham believed God. Abraham believed that THIS son would grow up, get married, have kids, and that ONE DAY, very far in the future, a great, great, great (and so on and so on) grandson would be born to Isaac, and THAT grandson would bless the entire world. That couldn't have happened if Isaac had died.

But Abraham believed God and took Isaac to Mount Moriah. He walked his son up the hill. They built the altar of stones, laying around the area. They put the wood on the altar, and at some point, Abraham tied up his son and laid him on the altar. Oh, how they must have been broken-hearted. Oh, how Isaac must have been scared.

But Abraham believed God. (Remember that when we believe God, we call that "faith"). Abraham assumed that he would have to kill his son that day, but he also knew that God could raise him back to life. So Abraham grabbed the knife and was just about to kill his son in obedience to God when a voice resounded from heaven, "Abraham, Abraham, I see that you fear God and that you won't withhold anything from me. Do not reach out your hand against your son, but go and look in the bushes, and there you will find a ram caught in the bushes."

This is where our two stories collide. These two lives twist together. Our little ram was caught in the bushes, and Abraham, the old shepherd who desperately needed a sacrifice in place of his son, pulled him from the thicket. God had provided the ram as an offering. When Isaac was set to die, God provided something in his place. And then we remember that Adam and Eve were supposed to die, and God killed something in their place. We remember that all the people of the world were supposed to die in the flood, but God provided a way for Noah's family to be saved.

I can barely wait to tell you how this all fits into the great masterpiece of God's plan, but like the ghosts who visited Ebenezer Scrooge one after the other so that that old angry man could have his heart changed just in time for Christmas morning, we too need to move on to another story so that our hearts will be changed just in time for Christmas. You won't want to miss what's coming.

Don't worry.

The Best is yet to come.