

## MACHPELAH

(Genesis 23)

Our grieving father Abraham—of faithful hearts the head—  
Had bargained for a Hittite cave where he could place his dead,  
His spouse and sister Sarah, who was partner in God's will  
To bring the promised blessing, which their Offspring would fulfill.

Believing God would give him all the land to which he came,  
He made a token purchase of a portion in his name:  
A simple plot for burying the dust of family love,  
While looking for the City that would come from God above.

So too, in mournful sorrow, we have planted cherished dust,  
Expecting God to keep His Word, the hope in which we trust—  
Anticipating that the ground we tread beneath our feet  
Will leave its bondage to decay and find its joy complete.

The promised Seed of Abraham already came and sought  
A piece of new creation, which His Cross and cave-tomb bought.  
He took that fleshly portion back to Heaven as His own.  
When His feet touch this earth again, the world will cease to groan.

In faith we wait for graves to yield the harvest of our grief.  
The coming resurrection will fulfill our heart's belief  
In God's plan for reunion of the body and the soul,  
Of which life's sweet embraces are mere tokens of the goal.

— *David L. Hatton, 12/23/2011*