



The Man of Greed & the Man in Need

By Marcus Lander (March 2012)

*A man with riches very great
Lived a life defined by luxury
While in the dust outside his gate
Lay a man confined to poverty.*

*A purple robe, the rich man wore
His clothes were always of the best
In contrast with the man so poor,
That in such tattered rags was dressed.*

*The rich man feasted every day
Kingly was his sumptuous fare
The fragrance blew where the poor man lay
And told of the treats he could not share.*

*His begging bowl was by his side
The rich man's crumbs he longed to eat
But he must learn to be satisfied
With the meagre pickings of the street.*

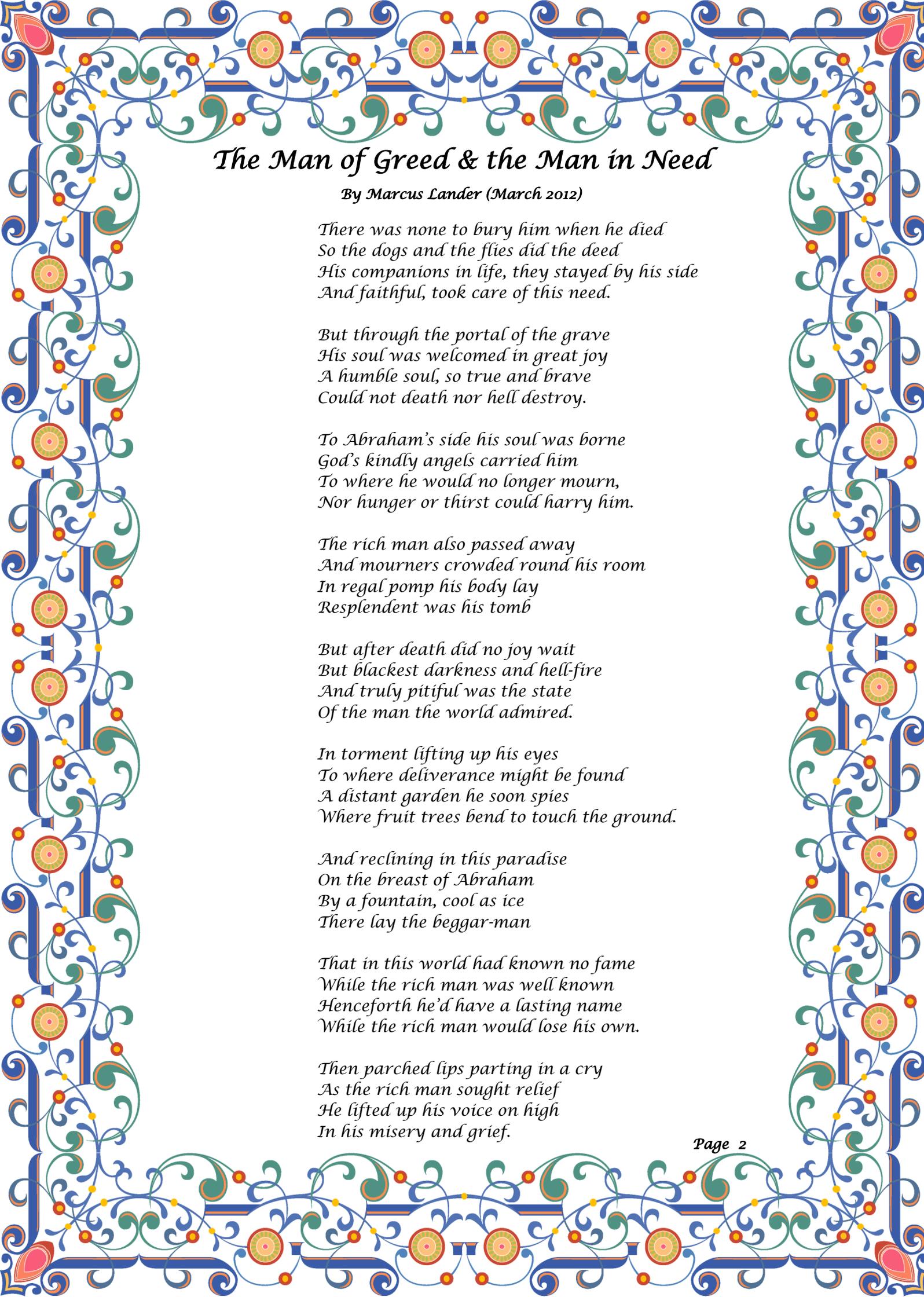
*Often the rich man passed him by
As he raised an outstretched hand
But the rich man ignored the beggar's cry
And closed his ears to his faint demand.*

*He'd no time to spare for the fellow there
For he'd far too much on his plate
He was well aware it might cost to care
So the poor man would have to wait.*

*While the rich man bathed, attended by slaves
Dust clogged the beggar man's pores
One was anointed and given a shave
While dogs licked the other man's sores.*

*Of God, the rich man seldom thought
Whose relevance he could not see
For he had cares of a different sort
Like what dishes to order for tea.*

*The poor man on the other hand
Had many a talk with the Lord
Who else would hear and understand
So his soul in prayer he outpoured.*



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*There was none to bury him when he died
So the dogs and the flies did the deed
His companions in life, they stayed by his side
And faithful, took care of this need.*

*But through the portal of the grave
His soul was welcomed in great joy
A humble soul, so true and brave
Could not death nor hell destroy.*

*To Abraham's side his soul was borne
God's kindly angels carried him
To where he would no longer mourn,
Nor hunger or thirst could harry him.*

*The rich man also passed away
And mourners crowded round his room
In regal pomp his body lay
Resplendent was his tomb*

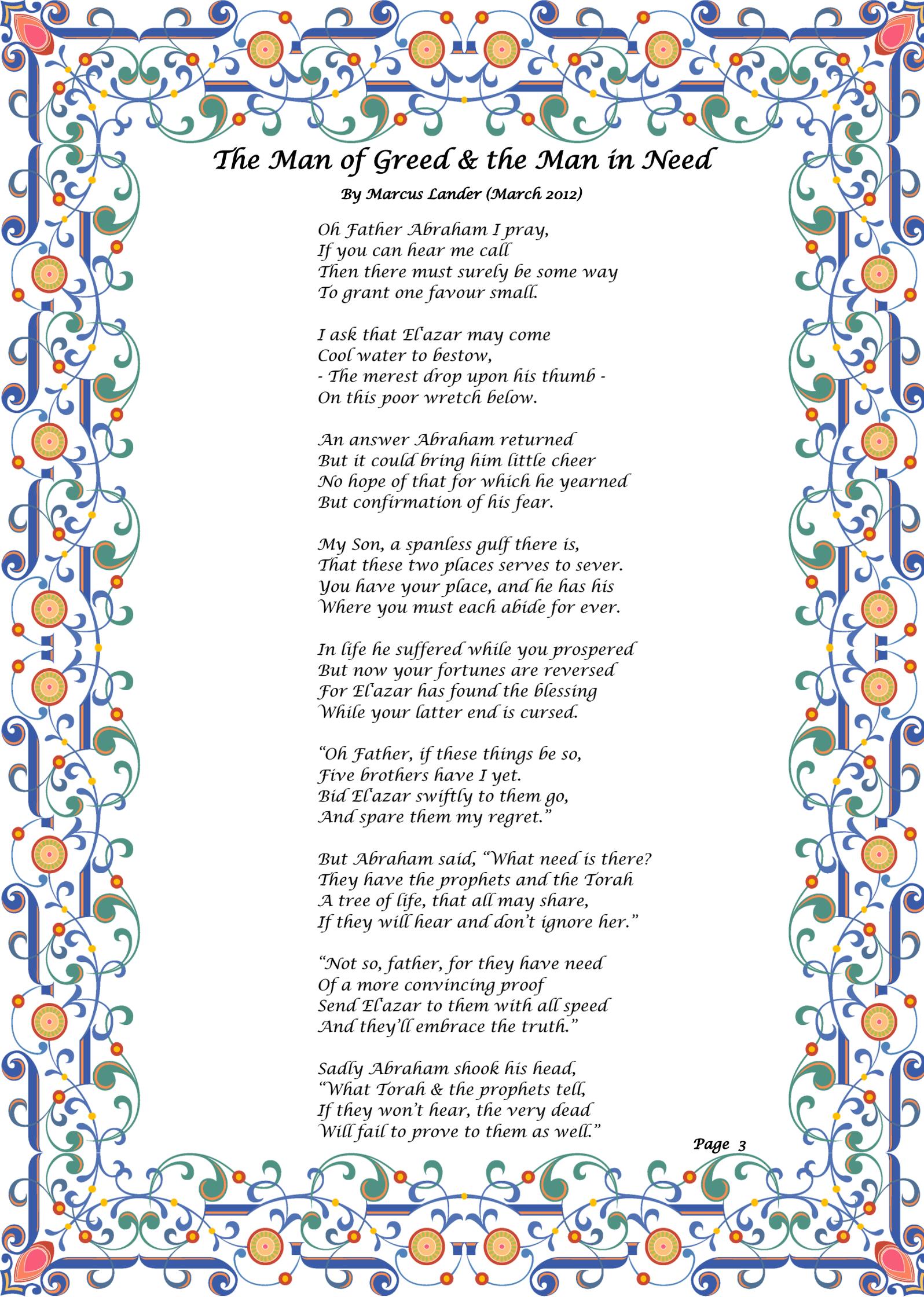
*But after death did no joy wait
But blackest darkness and hell-fire
And truly pitiful was the state
Of the man the world admired.*

*In torment lifting up his eyes
To where deliverance might be found
A distant garden he soon spies
Where fruit trees bend to touch the ground.*

*And reclining in this paradise
On the breast of Abraham
By a fountain, cool as ice
There lay the beggar-man*

*That in this world had known no fame
While the rich man was well known
Henceforth he'd have a lasting name
While the rich man would lose his own.*

*Then parched lips parting in a cry
As the rich man sought relief
He lifted up his voice on high
In his misery and grief.*



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*Oh Father Abraham I pray,
If you can hear me call
Then there must surely be some way
To grant one favour small.*

*I ask that El'azar may come
Cool water to bestow,
- The merest drop upon his thumb -
On this poor wretch below.*

*An answer Abraham returned
But it could bring him little cheer
No hope of that for which he yearned
But confirmation of his fear.*

*My Son, a spanless gulf there is,
That these two places serves to sever.
You have your place, and he has his
Where you must each abide for ever.*

*In life he suffered while you prospered
But now your fortunes are reversed
For El'azar has found the blessing
While your latter end is cursed.*

*"Oh Father, if these things be so,
Five brothers have I yet.
Bid El'azar swiftly to them go,
And spare them my regret."*

*But Abraham said, "What need is there?
They have the prophets and the Torah
A tree of life, that all may share,
If they will hear and don't ignore her."*

*"Not so, father, for they have need
Of a more convincing proof
Send El'azar to them with all speed
And they'll embrace the truth."*

*Sadly Abraham shook his head,
"What Torah & the prophets tell,
If they won't hear, the very dead
Will fail to prove to them as well."*



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*This tale was by a prophet told
To us who are the rich man's kin,
That we should not make gods of gold,
But rather shun the rich man's sin.*

*Not in this world, but in the next
Our treasure we should lay in store:
Relieving those who are oppressed
And showing mercy to the poor.*

*For we are of the rich man's seed
And poverty dwells at our gate;
If we turn from greed to the man in need
Then for us, God in mercy will wait.*

*Though this tale be rather serious
With little cause for laughter,
Those who hearken to this story
Shall live happy ever after.*