

## Family Tree

*Adam:* The wind hissed  
in the branches,  
green tongues  
whispering  
a secret I could  
never peel open.

*Moses:* When I raised my staff  
the sea split like a log  
opening its chapters  
into a story  
a whole nation could  
walk through.

*Elijah:* Ravens gathered berries  
and dropped them  
into my mouth  
as if to plant  
their dark cries  
in my voice.

*Jesus:*           Come closer.  
                      Taste the wood,  
                      feel it splinter  
                      your tongue  
                      into praise.

*Joseph Smith:* I bowed my head  
                      onto a stump,  
                      as if to a martyr's axe  
                      and when I looked up  
                      I saw the whole grove  
                      burning down.

---

MICHAEL HICKS is a professor of music at Brigham Young University. Author of three books and many published articles and poems, he also writes avant-garde chamber music.