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**LONGINGS WHICH CAN ONLY BE FULFILLED BY CHRIST**  
By Duane V. Maxey, New Year's Eve, December 31, 2009

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**INTRODUCTION AND POEM**

At this very moment, within our present dwelling in Surprise, Arizona (Mountain Standard Time), it is 6:30 p.m. -- less that 6 hours from the arrival of the year 2010 -- on the brink of one more New Year.

The above picture was taken by someone in 2008 at the Kensico Cemetery, Valhalla, New York. In this article I shall present first, one of my favorite poems, written by Elizabeth (Akers) Allen, and beneath the poem, I shall place some of my comments about its contents on this New Year's Eve:

\* \* \*

### **ROCK ME TO SLEEP**

By Elizabeth (Akers) Allen -- 1832-1911

#### **Verse 1**

Backward, turn backward, O Time, in your flight,  
Make me a child again, just for tonight.  
Mother, come back from the echoless shore,  
Take me again to your heart as of yore;  
Kiss from my forehead the furrows of care,  
Smooth the few silver threads out of my hair;  
Over my slumbers your loving watch keep;  
Rock me to sleep, mother, -- rock me to sleep!

#### **Verse 2**

Backward, flow backward, O tide of the years!  
I am so weary of toil and of tears,  
Toil without recompense, tears all in vain,  
Take them, and give me my childhood again!  
I have grown weary of dust and decay,  
Weary of flinging my soul-wealth away;  
Weary of sowing for others to reap;  
Rock me to sleep, mother, -- rock me to sleep!

#### **Verse 3**

Tired of the hollow, the base, the untrue,  
Mother, O mother, my heart calls for you!  
Many a summer the grass has grown green,  
Blossomed and faded, our faces between:  
Yet with strong yearning and passionate pain,  
Long I tonight for your presence again.  
Come from the silence so long and so deep;  
Rock me to sleep, mother, -- rock me to sleep!

#### **Verse 4**

Over my heart, in the days that are flown  
No love like mother-love ever has shone;  
No other worship abides and endures,--  
Faithful, unselfish, and patient, like yours:  
None like a mother can charm away pain  
From the sick soul and the world-weary brain.  
Slumber's soft calms o'er my heavy lids creep;--  
Rock me to sleep, mother, -- rock me to sleep!

**Verse 5**

Come, let your brown hair, just lighted with gold.  
Fall on your shoulders again as of old;  
Let it drop over my forehead tonight,  
Shading my faint eyes away from the light;  
For with its sunny-edged shadows once more  
Haply will throng the sweet visions of yore;  
Lovingly, softly, its bright billows sweep;  
Rock me to sleep, mother, -- rock me to sleep!

**Verse 6**

Mother, dear mother, the years have been long  
Since I last listened your lullaby song:  
Sing, then, and unto my soul it shall seem  
Womanhood's years have been only a dream.  
Clasped to your heart in a loving embrace,  
With your light lashes just sweeping my face,  
Never hereafter to wake or to weep;  
Rock me to sleep, mother, -- rock me to sleep!

\* \* \* \* \*

**01 -- COMMENTS UPON VERSE 1 OF THE POEM**

Verse 1 of Elizabeth (Akers) Allen's poem, "Rock Me To Sleep," begins by begging for that which has occurred only once: "Backward, turn backward, O time in your flight." In 2 Kings 20:11 we read: -- "And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the Lord: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz." While He could have, I doubt that God actually reversed time during that interval. I think, instead, He merely reversed the sun's shadow on the Sun-Dial of king Ahaz. Be that as it may, "Time Marches On" relentlessly toward its eternal ending. Good advice indeed, is that which was written by one songwriter:

"Time is filled with swift transition,  
Nought of earth unmoved shall stand,  
Build your hopes on things eternal,  
Hold to God's unchanging hand."

\* \* \* \* \*

## 02 -- COMMENTS UPON VERSE 2 OF THE POEM

The first line of Verse 2 begs for a "flow" back again of that "ebb" in the tide of life which has swept away from her grasp, the carefree, innocent childhood of the poetess: "Backward, flow backward, O tide of the years" -- followed in line 4 by the request: "give me my childhood again."

I have borrowed the following from hdm0628, "Gospel Dynamite" by Oscar Hudson:

"Sam Bass, a noted desperado, was once hiding in a river bottom at the back of a farm waiting for the shadows of night to assist him in evading the officers of the law. Just before sunset a lad near eleven years of age, left the farm house and came down across the field. He whooped and sang, whistled and yelled, giving vent to the innocency of his boyish heart. Tears came in the eyes of Sam Bass, and turning to his companion, he said, 'Jackson, I would give every dollar these hands ever handled, if it were possible, if I could turn time back again and stand where that boy stands.'

"What was it he desired? A day without remorse. A chance to breathe God's pure air and feel again the same purity within. He had known adventure and handled much gold, but in doing so, he had followed a sinful course. In that way all are denied the only thing that affords contentment and happiness. This thing is innocency. Sin wipes out innocency with its first stroke and places a sense of pollution in its stead."

But even the backward flow of life's tide could not bring back the innocence of one's childhood. Thank God, Christ's forgiveness, can, and does restore that innocence: -- "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:1). It is a restoration of innocence, not by the backward flow of Time's tide, but by the inward flow of Christ's precious blood, washing away forever the past sins of the one who is made a "new creature in Christ Jesus."

\* \* \* \* \*

## 03 -- COMMENTS UPON VERSE 3 OF THE POEM

Verse 3 of "Rock Me To Sleep" is my favorite. Its first two lines read:

"Tired of the hollow, the base, the untrue,

**Mother, O mother, my heart calls for you!"**

**Whether Elizabeth (Akers) Allen realized it or not, the real, inward cry of her heart might more accurately have been written thus:**

**"Tired of the hollow, the base, the untrue,  
JESUS, O JESUS, my heart calls for you!"**

**Along with all of the years of Time preceding it, the year 2009 has been filled to overflowing with "the hollow, the base, the untrue."**

**But, the cry of Man's heart for a filling with that with is "Substantive, Solid," and not "Hollow" -- for that which is "Noble" and not "Ignoble" and Base" -- and for that which is "True" and not "False" -- cannot be satisfied with a RETURN TO THE PAST, but only with a RETURN TO THE CHRIST of Calvary. He alone can give one's life real Substance instead of the Hollowness and vanity of the world. Even now, He lives and is "ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things" (Eph. 4:10) with the Solid Fullness of Himself and His Spirit! Christ alone is He who can remove the "base" from one's life by taking it away and filling one's heart with the uplifting nobility of His Holiness and His Purity. And, for those who are "Tired of.. the untrue" He says in John 14:6 -- "I am the way, the TRUTH, and the life.." It is not by going back to the past that one can rid himself or herself of being "tired of the untrue" -- it is by coming forth to Christ, who is THE TRUTH, and who has promised in John 14:16-17 -- "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH.."**

**\* \* \* \* \***

#### **04 -- COMMENTS UPON VERSE 4 OF THE POEM**

**In Verse 4, the poetess errs when she writes in lines 2 and 3:**

**"No love like mother-love ever has shone;  
No other worship abides and endures,--"**

**Had she been inspired of the Holy Spirit, she would have more likely written something similar to the following:**

**"No love like Jesus' love ever has shone;  
No other worship abides and endures,--"**

**It is the Love of Jesus which OUTSHINES THAT OF ALL OTHERS, and it is the worship of Christ which abides throughout time, and SHALL ENDURE THROUGHOUT ETERNITY -- WORLD WITHOUT END! HALLELUJAH!**

**\* \* \* \* \***

## **05 -- COMMENTS UPON VERSE 5 OF THE POEM**

In lines one and two of Verse 5 she invites the return of her precious mother:

"Come, let your brown hair, just lighted with gold.  
Fall on your shoulders again as of old;"

Her invitation had better been directed to the Savior:

"Come, let your blood, shed for me on the cross,  
Cleanse me from sin, and remove all my dross."

The deepest longings of the human heart can only be fulfilled by an invitation which brings Jesus into one's heart to cleanse from past outward sins and inherited, inward dross.

Here is the invitation which many have sung, who, when Jesus came in, cleansed them from all past and inward dross:

Into my heart, into my heart,  
Come into my heart, Lord Jesus;  
Come in today, come in to stay;  
Come into my heart, Lord Jesus.

\* \* \* \* \*

## **06 -- COMMENTS UPON VERSE 6 OF THE POEM**

In the last four lines of Verse 6, Elizabeth (Akers) Allen, longs to be be rejoined with her mother and rocked to sleep into an sweet, and endless dream:

'Clasped to your heart in a loving embrace,  
With your light lashes just sweeping my face,  
Never hereafter to wake or to weep;  
Rock me to sleep, mother, -- rock me to sleep!'

These lines remind me of the following lines by William Cullen Bryant (November 3, 1794 – June 12, 1878) in his poem, Thanatopsis:

"So live, that when thy summons comes to join  
The innumerable caravan which moves  
To that mysterious realm where each shall take  
His chamber in the silent halls of death,  
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,  
Scourged by his dungeon; but, sustain'd and soothed

**By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,  
LIKE ONE WHO WRAPS THE DRAPERY OF HIS COUCH  
ABOUT HIM, AND LIES DOWN TO PLEASANT DREAMS."**

How sad! that Elizabeth (Akers) Allen's greatest wish seemed to be that she could be "Rocked To Sleep" by her mother -- into and blissful dream and endless slumber.

How unfulfilling! -- the concepts of those like William Cullen Bryant, who picture the death of one who lives well as only "like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

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### **CONCLUDING COMMENTS**

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow came closer to the truth in this verse of his poem, "The Psalm of Life":

**Life is real! Life is earnest!  
And the grave is not its goal;  
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,  
Was not spoken of the soul.**

Jesus did not come, and die that we might be "Rocked Into A Pleasant, Eternal Dream" from which we never awake.

In regard to those redeemed by His blood, Jesus said in John 10:10 -- "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." And, so "abundant" is the Life that Jesus brings the redeemed that it is ETERNAL, AND ENDLESS!

At Christ's Return, He shall not Rock the Redeemed Into An Endless, Blissful Sleep" -- No! His Trumpet shall sound, and all of the Redeemed shall be ETERNALLY AWAKENED FROM THE DEAD, and then "go away" from this present evil world "into LIFE ETERNAL" (Matthew 25:46)!

Read again 1 John 5:11 -- "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

No, ten million times, NO! the longings of every soul shall not be fulfilled by being rocked into a blissful, eternal sleep! Quite the opposite, Dan 12:2 tells us that those "that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

**As I bring this, my final article of 2009 to a conclusion, it is now nearing 8:30 p.m. (Mountain Standard Time) in Surprise (Suburban Phoenix), Arizona. Soon those in this state, following some who have already done so in the more eastern parts of our globe, shall herald in the New Year -- 2010. And, Time is swiftly moving to its end when God's angel shall "stand upon the sea and upon the earth" and lift "up his hand to heaven, and swear by Him that liveth for ever and ever, Who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, THAT THERE SHOULD BE TIME NO LONGER" (Revelation 10:6).**

**In John 6:40, Jesus said: -- "And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have EVERLASTING LIFE: and I WILL RAISE HIM UP AT THE LAST DAY."**

**Hallelujah! The fulfillment of life's longings, shall not be accomplished for the Redeemed of Christ by being "Rocked Into An Eternal, Blissful Sleep," but rather by being AWAKENED FROM THE DEAD AT HIS RETURN, INTO AN ETERNAL, BLISSFUL LIFE -- IN THE HOLY CITY, AND IN THE NEW HEAVENS AND NEW EARTH WHEREIN DWELLETH RIGHTEOUSNESS!**

**The arrival of January 1, 2010, makes that DAY OF ALL DAYS, one day, and one year closer. "WHAT A DAY, GLORIOUS DAY, THAT SHALL BE!" For Christ, and the servants in His Heavenly domain constitute a "kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Daniel 6:26), but which shall endure forever. Of this we can be assured for they have been declared by Him who said in Revelation 1:18 -- I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen."**

**\* \* \* \* \***

**THE END**