

A Sermon for DaySpring

By Burt L. Burleson

“A Time is Coming”

Jeremiah 31: 27-34

October 17, 2004

A Time is Coming

*There is something to look forward to,
All the saints say it's so... that faith unfolds.
One thing gives way to another...
at least it should...
it can.*

*And in the giving way and in the unfolding...
Something new is there.
Or laid bare,
having been hidden, within the old.*

A Time is Coming

*Faith moves from this to that...
Noah's fear of God gives way to Abraham's deep friendship.
Jacob's wrestling gives way to Joseph's submission.
Moses moves out of Pharaoh's house.*

A Time is Coming

*Faith moves... it becomes.
Egyptian bondage
becomes desert wandering
and then Jordan crossing.
Promises made are sealed tight, Divine word contained in a golden box.
It radiates...
it bows the head...
is carried with trembling hands.
It moves... here and there... faith dwelling in a tent.
Then into seeming templed permanence...
columned strength...
altared assurance. Finally!*

But no

*Faith moves...
Jerusalem's walls crumble...
chosen are exiled.*

*Home is where the heart is... and faith written in old static stone...
Must now be engraved on a pulsing heart.*

A Time is Coming

Faith unfolds... the Bible says it's so.

One thing leads to another.

In the beginning, faith is rocked into a body and sweetly sung into little ears.

And little faith is then encircled by kind faces and warm choruses of amens.

Stories are retold...

and rules are laid down...

and creeds encoded.

And faith unfolds...

In simple confessions...

in agonizing questions...

in silent trust.

The faith handed to... the faith laid upon... unfolds.

Is enfolded... in some interior place, where it is owned.

Where rules are seen inside out

and the Rule Maker is befriended.

And the Maker writes with loving language at the deepest level

What takes a lifetime to read.

A Time is Coming

It's this way... all the saints say it's so.

It begins in garden innocence, naked oneness.

But can't remain there...

there is the separation...

lostness somewhere East of Eden.

There is some curse carried, guilt seen, and forgiven.

And remembered no more.

And a soul takes convincing that it is remembered no more.

Living and falling and hearing again, "remembered no more."

Again... "remembered no more."

Again... "remembered no more."

And someday believing it where it matters.

A Time is Coming

There is this movement from this to that... or there should be... or can be.

Old covenants give way... perhaps only in the face of some exile...

Only where something lesser is lost... And something new comes.

A nation without becomes a kingdom within...

and what was preached to, now flows from.

And commandments become beatitudes...

*Christ descends with a new law.
 "Thou shalt not" becomes "blessed are those" ...
 Moses gives way to Jesus...
 and law to gospel...
 and tomb to Easter.
 There is a new covenant, a new way of being, a new creation.*

A Time is Coming

*When certainty fades into mystery... and absolutes into the Absolute.
 And hearts are lifted and held by what is Eternal.
 Suspended by gravity from above.
 There is movement... and upward movement as faith unfolds...
 it ascends and awakens.
 Signs become symbols...
 And symbols touch the real,
 and water cleanses...
 and bread feeds.
 And worship extends out where lives become hymns.
 And the served become the servants.
 And Spirit envelopes all.
 And the many become one, one body that walks grace into the world.*

A Time is Coming

*Faith unfolds... it is so.
 Life unfolds... it is so,
 From old covenant to new,
 from glory to glory,
 From Word to flesh and back again... it unfolds.
 Until all is seen and surrendered,
 Until all is known as it has been known.
 Until shadows fall and tears dry.
 Until all is one,
 beginning and end,
 alpha and omega.
 Amen and amen... thanks be to God.*

A Time is Coming.

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