

Havdalah

*B*lack into white
light into shadow
Blessing into curse
Doubt into belief.

Nothing comes divided
neatly severed
cut off
one half from another
Trimmed polarities.

Nothing is given pure, simple, unalloyed
Nothing is given in halves
Except—idolatries.

In strange worship
halves and quarters pretend wholeness
A small coin held close to the eye blocks out the world
and everything appears draped in darkness.

Simple solutions blur distinctions
Confusing blindness with wholeness.



Light and shadow, sweet and bitter
the admixture is inseparable.

Accept it whole
fragrance and galbanum belong together
elements of sanctified incense.

Accept it whole
Yet not without distinction
Yours is not theirs
day is not night.

Accept it whole
but not with cruel division
that amputates organic wholeness.

Accept it whole without the conceit of absorption
thinks to swallow up the shadow side with light.

Accept it whole
not renting whole cloth into convenient rags
Sundering the universe into segregated parts
Good and evil
Week and Sabbath
Them and us.

Divisions desecrate
Hard disjunctives rip apart the underlying unity
the possibility of reconciliation.

Hallow the link between darkness and light
the mundane and the festive
the others and us.

Hallow the circles which demark separate styles
but also the outer lines which converge
penetrate each other without assimilation
Creation and separation
Kiddush and Havdalah
Different wines and different candles.

