

Reclaiming The Darkness

The Christian tradition has had a tendency to portray light as good and darkness as bad. But we do have many readings, particularly in the Old Testament which don't express darkness and light in this dualistic way. Darkness can be positive, darkness can be the place where God resides. So here we reclaim and celebrate the darkness and God's presence within it.

A grumpy grunt from under the duvet
signals the unwelcome glint of dawn
Half-remembered visions paint the dark
with rainbowed possibility
as eyes are screwed tight to protect
the velvety warmth of sleep.

For darkness and light are as one
to the God who tore them apart

A snowy boot prints the Christmas carpet
as stockings mysteriously fill
A fairy-flown coin buys
the evidence of infancy left behind
while downstairs teenagers steal
a first, whispered kiss.

For darkness and light are as one
to the God who tore them apart

A mystery speaks
words of wisdom, fear and care
In the darkness floats possibility
unshaped, unformed, unborn
Out of the darkness bursts
creation. Words of life.

For darkness and light are as one
to the God who tore them apart

A coach trip to Blackpool to see the lights
companionable darkness, backdrop to faded glamour
Gunpowder-painted flashes of beauty
crack with festive colour
Pinpricks in night's black curtain remind us
how fragile and small we are.

For darkness and light are as one
to the God who tore them apart

Beneath the soil, a God-planted seed
rests and rots, as slowly, precariously
life forces itself out into the damp
nourishing shelter of winter's loam

waiting, growing, strengthening
until spring rips the shoot from its shelter.

For darkness and light are as one
to the God who tore them apart

The beauty of an eclipse
brings mysterious darkness
viewed though a pin-prick
A two thousand year shadow
of darkness at noon
Three hours of solitude.

For darkness and light are as one
to the God who tore them apart

For out of the darkness came the cry:
My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
And in afternoon light, a body was broken
as earlier, in protective dark
he had predicted when breaking bread:
This is my body, broken for you.

For darkness and light are as one
to the God who tore them apart

[Share bread]

And the wine, crushed in the day
fermented in the still of dark
a celebration of the blood
which was to stain the sun-parched earth
at the foot of his cross:
This is my blood, poured out for you.

For darkness and light are as one
to the God who tore them apart

[Share wine]

So, here, in the protective folds of darkness
we have shared in love's feast.
Let us not wallow
in the dark comfort of the present
send us out to face the glare
of the world's spotlight.

For darkness and light are as one
to the God who tore them apart

© Clare McBeath and Tim Presswood, 2008