

Leaving Ourselves at the Altar

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There is heartbreak in letting go
Turning our face from the place of our birth
But not wanting to forsake life in Eden
For a land stained with blood
Haunted by the cries from a field
Where we've done violence to one another

We've wandered so far from that country of origin
Marking ourselves with a burden
Yet protected and provided
Repeating in a mantra:
Even though I walk through the deepest, darkest valley,
I fear no evil

When we cannot look any deeper
When there is none who can peer into the inner parts
The depths where we dare not go
Our hearts are anointed
And preserved
To not be of want
To eat from the fruit of light
And not from darkness
But to walk again on paths of righteousness

I've brought sacrifices to the altar
Holding on to the very things
I was there to give up
Clutching even to pain
Sometimes that's all you have to hold on to
And giving up your image is too great to ask
Keeping your feet stuck in the ground
Preventing you from moving forward.

When I thought I had my vision
Claiming to see
My blindness returned
Another taste of the fruit of good and evil
A veil of darkness fell over me

But there is an invitation to receive vision again
Blind eyes made open
In the dirt and the mud
The pools of Siloam that wash over us allowing us to move forward
From the ashes of the altar to the place of our promise

And we look in these waters
Seeing ourselves for the first time
Learning our own faces
In the waters that saved us
As though we were remade in another's image

When we run away, goodness and mercy pursue us with tenacious love
The kind that travels to distant lands
To meet us right here in this place we're at
Putting together the pieces of our life
To make us one
again.