

To Dwell Within - A Mishkan Thought

Cities, towns, homes, rooms. As beings we seek the safety and comfort of shelter. We live within the walls that have been erected, the roof that shields us from the chaotic outside.

Mountains, valleys, forests, pathways. Pushed out and away from the quiet solace of our home- we wander. Exiled, we err, we lose the situatedness of at-home-ness. In the circling pathways, the overgrown roads, we crawl backwards towards the edifices that promise protection. On the endless paths of exilic steps, the forgotten memory of sheltered being erupts as the memory of forgotten space fills the wandering mind.

Returning, endlessly re/turning back to the beginning (*beis/bayis*) we reenter the homes of memory, the structures of comfort- to find that everything has changed. Rooms, once ordinary, transform into moods. The color stirs, the ancient is renewed as the familiar evokes wonder. Home, the banal structure of necessity melts into a dwelling. To dwell, to live within, to enter the space of memory. We dwell in the body of stone, brick, wood. We dwell within it as it dwells within us.

The transformation of home to dwelling, of place to space, endows the structures of our lives with presence. To rest within, to be within is to live through the dwelling.

The vicissitudes of exile are not limited to the outside. To live in a house is not synonymous with dwelling. The exile of plainness, the insidious sameness of the ordinary creeps in through the cracks of the house.

The *poetics of space*, the embodied dwelling means to dwell within as we open ourselves to the dwelling.

...and have them make for me a dwelling, so that I may dwell among them...

...not among them- rather- within them...