

Chicago Pride Havdallah 2021

Shavuah Tov! I'm so thrilled to be here all together this evening - it is really beautiful and powerful to gather as community in this way. הִנֵּה מָה טוֹב וַיְמָה נְעִים שָׁבֶת כּוֹלֵנוּ גַם יַחַד - *How good and pleasant it is for us all to gather together.*

An offering I'd like to share this evening is a poem or prayer by Rabbi Reuben Zellman about liminal spaces, about in-betweenness. We are gathering right now in a liminal moment of twilight, or near twilight - between the calm of Shabbat, and the start of a new week, between the *kodesh*, the holy of Shabbat, and the *chol*, the everyday.

We're also, perhaps, in a liminal space of Zoom - we're not in person, but we're together. We're little specks in cyberspace, spanning homes and devices - but we're forming this beautiful community of ritual and pride.

We're also, I think, in a liminal space as LGBTQ+ people, in our history and in our journey - we have come really, really far in our fight for equality and inclusion. I'm thinking about our ancestors, our queer and trans siblings who fought oppression and injustice, moving us forward towards a world of pride and belonging. **And**, we still have so much work to do as we move into the future. We have so much work to do, in solidarity, against racism, against anti-Blackness, against classism, sexism, ableism, against fatphobia, and xenophobia and so many systemic oppressions. So, we're at another moment of in-betweenness: we stand on the shoulders of those who came before us, while looking towards our future in coalition, in community, building towards justice.

Which brings us to Rabbi Zellman's poem, titled [Twilight People](#). Its preface reads, "The poem is a reminder that twilight is not necessarily only a place of otherness - neither day nor night. Instead, it can be a positive, plural space for everyone. The symbolism of the 'twilight' can be the sacred in-between space - a moment of transformation and rebirth."

So, *Twilight People Prayer* by Rabbi Reuben Zellman:

Twilight People Prayer

"As the sun sinks and the colors of the day turn, we offer a blessing for the twilight,

for twilight is neither day nor night, but in-between.

We are all twilight people. We can never be fully labeled or defined.

We are many identities and loves, many genders and none. We are in between roles, at the intersection of histories, or between place and place.

We are crisscrossed paths of memory and destination, streaks of light swirled together.

We are neither day nor night.

We are both, neither, and all.

May the sacred in-between of this evening suspend our certainties, soften our judgments, and

widen our vision.

May this in-between light illuminate our way to the God who transcends all categories and definitions.

May the in-between people who have come to pray be lifted up into this twilight.

We cannot always define; we can always say a blessing.

Blessed are You, God of all,

who brings on the twilight."

Thank you!