**Holy Thursday (from *Songs of Experience*)**

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| Is this a holy thing to see,  In a rich and fruitful land,  Babes reduc’d to misery,  Fed with cold and usurous hand?  Is that trembling cry a song?  Can it be a song of joy?  And so many children poor?  It is a land of poverty!  And their sun does never shine.  And their fields are bleak & bare.  And their ways are fill'd with thorns.  It is eternal winter there.  For where-e'er the sun does shine,  And where-e'er the rain does fall:  Babe can never hunger there,  Nor poverty the mind appall. | Why do you think the voice uses an **interrogative**?  What I the **tone** that the reference to “holy thing” creates?  What does “usurious” mean? What is the effect of the word being strongly associated with the Bible?  In language, when a part is used to represent a whole it is called **synecdoche**. Can you see an example of this in this stanza and what do you think the effect is?  What is the effect of having a reference to “song” here after the emphasis on “see” in the first stanza?  What is the effect of having a series of interrogatives followed by an exclamative?  How does the rhyme scheme in this poem differ from that of the first stanza? Can you think of an interpretation for this?  What **contrast** or **antithesis** is Blake setting up in the second stanza (i.e. what contrasts in the first stanza with “poverty” in the first)? What do you think is the effect of this?  What do you think is the effect here of **fronting** the ‘And’ at the beginning of three lines?  What are the **connotations** of using the word “thorns” here?  What is the **symbolism** of the **setting** in this poem? How does it contrast with some of the innocence poems?  What does Blake suggest with the phrase “eternal winter”?  What do you think is the effect of the second line echoing the first?  How would you characterize the “where-e’er” that Blake conjures up here?  What is the effect of using the singular “Babe”?  What is interesting about the way Blake uses the word “hunger” (it is not used as an abstract noun)? |