

## WINTER SOLSTICE – 21 JUNE

Winter solstice is celebrated by many around the world. The Talmud (central text of Rabbinic Judaism) recognised the winter solstice as *Tekufet Tevet*. *Tekufet* from the Hebrew *tekufah* literally means “turn” or “cycle.”

Cultures around the world observe this day in a variety of ways. Most celebrations arise from and are related to our earthed nature –our need for and the gifts of both light and darkness.

How are you experiencing this turning at this time? What gifts are you discovering? How might you recognise and give thanks?

God has to work in the soul in secret and in darkness because if we fully knew what was happening, and what Mystery, transformation, God and Grace will eventually ask of us, we would either try to take charge or stop the whole process.

•*St. John of the Cross*

God of the two lights,  
I love the sun,  
its revealing brilliance,  
its lingering warmth;  
but in the dark of night,  
let me learn  
the wisdom of the moon,  
how it waxes and wanes  
but does not die,  
how it gives itself  
to shadow,  
knowing it will emerge whole  
once more.

•*Jan Richardson*

Winter's cold but it's not spiteful  
It's old and wise and beautifully insightful  
It understands what's in the heart  
It knows its way around the earth  
It knows of every death and every birth

So off you go into the winter clouds old friend  
There to weep and there to smile and mend  
To meet the sun and feel delight  
Winter's cold but it's not spiteful

– *Michael Leunig*

To go in the dark with a light is to know  
the light. To know the dark, go dark.  
Go without sight, and find that the dark,  
too, blooms and sings, and is travelled  
by dark feet and dark wings.

– *Wendell Berry*

God of Day and God of Darkness,  
be with me through  
the long winter's night  
and raise me into  
the new day with you.

May I go deep enough  
into this darkness  
to find another kind of light  
shining.

May I cast my vision on the seed  
that is now lying dormant  
below the earth and *in me*.

May I trust that Love  
remains ever at work,  
even in my resting and stillness  
keeping and tending my life.

Amen

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