

# Friends of Silence

Vol. XXXV, No. 10

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November 2022

“Is there enough Silence for the Word to be heard?”

Dear Friends ~ Two challenging, yet inviting, questions have plagued me over the past month. We see escalating wars across the globe, natural disasters made worse by climate change, and an ever-evolving world virus situation. Covid’s ever-changing variants force scientists to remain vigilant with new vaccines to counter them, while some tackle monkeypox and other virulent viruses. As I write, we in the United States have entered the harvest season, preparing for the feast of Thanksgiving. Other countries and cultures mark the Harvest in other seasons, all with myriad meals and festivities.



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No matter where we are in the world or what tangible crops we gather in, let us ponder together what we each, personally, harvest from these times in which we live. Perhaps another way to look at it is to consider what we bring to nourish and diversify this table of plenty.

Likewise, may we reflect on the harvest of silence herself, practiced in patience, sincerity, and love, in the depths of languages and religions, formal and informal, throughout the universe. I am heartened by a recent book GOLDEN: THE POWER OF SILENCE IN A WORLD OF NOISE by Justin Zorn and Leigh Marz. Even in the midst of a world wailing with sorrows, we can tap an inner core, gleaning our harvest of gratitude. ~ Mary Ann



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**As I watch'd the ploughman ploughing,  
Or the sower sowing in the fields, or the harvester harvesting,  
I saw there, too, O life and death, your analogies;  
(Life, life is the tillage, and Death is the harvest according.)**

~ Walt Whitman, “As I Watche'd The Ploughman Ploughing,” in LEAVES OF GRASS

**Listen to silence.  
It has so much to say.**  
~ Rumi

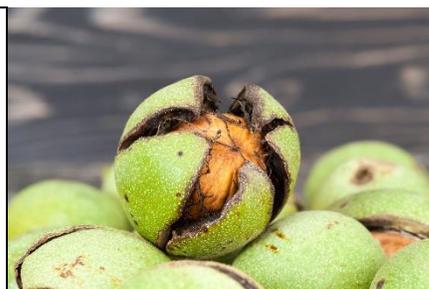
We have to say “Thank you” whenever possible even if we are not able to reconcile the human creatures’ free will with the Maker’s working out of a pattern. Thanks and Praise are, I believe, some of the threads with which the pattern is woven.

**Open your eyes and look at the fields.  
They are ripe for harvest.**  
~ John 4:35

~ Madeleine L'Engle in GLIMPSES OF GRACE

**Harvests are a time to  
remember your sacrifice.**  
~ William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer in  
THE BOY WHO HARNESSSED THE WIND

**Judge each day not by the harvest you reap  
but by the seeds you sow.**  
~ William Arthur Ward



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**Go deep into the silence. Absorb it. Let it scare you. Let it reshape you and expand your awareness.**

~ Pythagoras, as quoted in *GOLDEN: THE POWER OF SILENCE IN A WORLD OF NOISE*  
by Justin Zorn and Leigh Mars

*You are the Silence  
Beyond birth, beyond death, beyond experiences,  
Beyond doubts, beyond opinions.  
Beyond whatever it is your body is going through,  
Whatever thoughts your mind thinks.  
You are beyond that.*

~ Robert Adams in *SILENCE OF THE HEART*

Silence isn't just the absence of noise. It's a presence that brings us energy, clarity, and deeper connection.

~ Justin Zorn and Leigh Marz in *GOLDEN: THE POWER OF SILENCE IN A WORLD OF NOISE*

To live a contemplative life is to be open enough to see, free enough to hear, real enough to respond. It is a life, and so has its own rhythms of darkness, dying-rising. Simply enough, it is a life of grateful receptivity, or wordless awe, of silent simplicity.

~ S. Marie Baha in *MEDITATIONS ON NATURE, MEDITATIONS ON SILENCE*

Surviving is for those who have no hope...as God's child you were meant to thrive... You were meant to dig deep and reach out...Balanced believers dig their roots and reach out for others.

~ Mark Hall in *THRIVE*

*She will give the bread of understanding to eat,  
And the water of wisdom to drink.*

~ Joyce Rupp from her interpretation of *Ecclesiastes* in  
*THE STAR IN MY HEAD: EXPERIENCING SOPHIA*

Gentle us, O Compassionate One, that  
We tread the earth lightly  
And with grace,  
Spreading peace, goodness, and love,  
Without harm to any creature.  
For in gentle serenity is strength  
And assurance;

Confusion and suspicion find  
No home here.  
In all things may we be be grateful,  
Our hearts open to joy.

~ Nan Merrill from her interpretation of "Psalm 105" in *PSALMS FOR PRAYING*



No sky could hold  
so much light -  
and here comes the brimming,  
the flooding and streaming  
out of the clouds  
and into the leaves,  
glazing the creeks,  
the smallest ditches!  
And so many stars!  
The sky seems stretched  
like an old black cloth;  
behind it, all  
the celestial fire  
we ever dreamed of!  
And the moon steps lower,  
quietly changing  
her luminous masks, brushing  
everything as she passes  
with her slow hands  
and soft lips -  
clusters of dark grapes,  
apples swinging like lost planets,  
melons cool and heavy as bodies -  
and the mockingbird wakes  
in his hidden castle;  
out of the silver tangle  
of thorns and leaves  
he flutters and tumbles,  
spilling long  
ribbons of music  
over forest and river,  
copse and cloud -  
all heaven and all earth.

~ Mary Oliver, "Harvest Moon -  
The Mockingbird Sings in the Night,"  
in *TWELVE MOONS*