

BLOG #10: THEMES OF THE VERNAL EQUINOX

A Happy Vernal (Spring) Equinox to all! Well, to all who live in the Northern Hemisphere, for in the Southern Hemisphere this March event is the Autumnal (Fall) Equinox. But wherever you live on our planet, daylight and darkness are now balanced, each twelve hours long. For this reason, this time of year offers an opportunity to contemplate the concept of balance, and I invite you to do so. What does balance mean? How can we find it or create it? When do we need balance, and when not?

Yes, balance is a traditional theme of the Equinox. But there are other themes, too. Some are traditional; some I have added as part of Tefistry. One key theme is Signs of the Season. Certainly in March I gain renewal and refreshment from the many signs of Spring. Trees in my town are blossoming now, on every street; colorful wildflowers are opening their petals in the oak woods; tiny leaves are unfurling on cottonwood and wild cherry and mountain mahogany; flickers are tapping on trunks and power poles; other birds, migrating north, will soon transit over our ridge lines, taking up their summer homes in our hills and valleys. All these are Signs of the Season; Tefistry honors other, different signs at each of eight Tefist festivals around the year.

Another key theme of the Vernal Equinox is the human life stage called childhood. Six weeks ago, we celebrated birth, at the festival of Imbolc. Since then, infancy and the early years have drawn our attention. Now the Equinox directs us to the heart of childhood, roughly from ages five to twelve. (Six weeks hence, at Beltane, we will honor puberty and the start of adolescence.) So now, at the Equinox, we take time to celebrate the enchanted years of childhood: its eagerness, its increasing independence, its expanding skills and powers, its growth, and exploration, and learning. As Rachael Carson observed in *The Sense of Wonder*, 1956:

“A child’s world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement. It is our misfortune that for most of us that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring, is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood....”

Other themes of the Vernal Equinox include the Cardinal Direction where now the March sun rises—due East; and the Hawk, soaring aloft on

swift, sure wings; and the fresh, wild Air, or Atmos, enjoyed by the Hawk; and the cool hours of dawn and early day; and our keenness of mind, the action of our Intellection. All these are important themes of the Vernal Equinox.

To these Equinox themes—Tefistry also calls them cors, short for correspondences—we give our thoughts and gladness. No, with luck we do more: We seek to enter fully into these themes so as to live our lives more harmoniously. We seek not only to observe the Spring and its themes, but to participate in it. We seek to become one with the season. As Henry David Thoreau urged us to do in his Journal, 1853:

“Live in each season as it passes; breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit, and resign yourself to the influences of each.”

Let us enter now the Heart of Spring. May Harmony Prevail!
