

Holiday Musings from Barbara Wilder and her dog Gage - 2008



Today is Christmas Eve, the fourth day of Hanukkah, the fifth day after the Winter Solstice, and two days before Kwanzaa begins. So, all in all, a pretty powerful day. I am, for the first time in my life celebrating this holiday alone. I chose to do this. An attack of the flu and pressing financial matters that had to be taken care of this week made it necessary to cancel spending the holidays with my family. So, here I am, all snuggled down with my dog Gage and my Christmas tree and decorations, thinking about what this holiday truly means to me this year.

I think a lot of us are experiencing this as a different kind of holiday season. There is much change in the universal energy. We are headed into a new era. It is exciting, and at the same time challenging, because we're not sure what is expected of us. And of course, there is the financial crisis, which is affecting many of us. There may not be as many gifts under the tree this year.

So, what is under your tree? What can you find there that has been hidden under a mound of store-bought gifts in the past? What is this time of year about anyway? When we look at the core stories of all of these holidays, we see that they are about finding the light in the darkness and celebrating the re-igniting of the flame of new life. The yule log was burned by the druids to bring light into the longest night of the year. The Star of Bethlehem was the light that led the Wise Men to find the baby Jesus, who was the Light of the World. The Hanukkah candles burn to celebrate a time when there was only enough oil in the temple's lamp to burn for one day, but lasted for eight days, keeping the besieged people filled with the hope of a brighter day. The seven Kwanzaa candles burn for the renewal of an entire peoples' faith and belief in themselves.

So, as I sit here writing to you, I am beginning to realize what I want to find under my tree tomorrow morning. First, I want to find a new sense of hope for myself and for the world. I want to unwrap my yet unfulfilled dreams. I want to find a deeper sense of caring for others. I want to open my heart to receive love and friendship and prosperity. I want to discover new ways that I can help those who are suffering. I want to pull out all the hidden treasures in my stocking *hanging by the chimney with care* that remind me of all I am grateful for that already exists in my life. My wonderful son, my adorable dog, my dear brother and sister-in-law, my beloved friends, my remarkable clients and students, and all of you.

My wish for you this holiday season is that you find new gifts under the Tree or next to the Menorah or Kwanzaa candles, gifts that will open your heart and bring you hope, peace, joy, and prosperity.

With great love and light,
Barbara & Gage