

*The Rituals of Winter ~ Home Study Course in Shamanic Herbalism*  
*Poems and Wise Words*

Dear Ones,

I am sharing here some poems about the wisdom of trees and nature that will enhance your experience of “The Rituals of Winter” home study course in shamanic herbalism. As you are participating in the rituals, take some time to read these words shared. You may wish to read them out loud or quietly to yourself. May it be in beauty.

Woods by Wendall Berry

I part the out thrusting branches  
and come in beneath  
the blessed and the blessing trees  
though I am silent  
there is singing around me  
though I am dark  
there is vision around me  
though I am heavy  
there is flight around me

A Chinook Prayer

How lovely are the holy groves  
God of heaven and earth  
My soul long and faints for the circle of thy trees.  
My heart and my flesh sing with joy to thee.  
Oh God of Life  
May all things move and be moved in me.  
May all creation dance for joy within me.

A Prayer that I wrote to connect with all of life

Beautiful woman of the land and sea  
Ancient grandmothers of the great mysteries  
Delicate flowers, common weeds and strong rooted trees,  
Through your guidance, I create a life fully lived.  
I know that I am you and you are me.

“The strength of the trees  
is our strength.”  
~ Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estes

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When I Am Among the Trees by Mary Oliver

When I am among the trees, especially the willows and the honey locust, equally the beech, the oaks and the pines, they give off such hints of gladness, I would almost say that they save me, and daily. I am so distant from the hope of myself, in which I have goodness, and discernment, and never hurry through the world but walk slowly, and bow often. Around me the trees stir in their leaves and call out, "Stay awhile." The light flows from their branches. And they call again, "It's simple," they say, "and you too have come into the world to do this, to go easy, to be filled with light, and to shine."

Sleeping in the Forest by Mary Oliver

I thought the earth remembered me, she took me back so tenderly, arranging her dark skirts, her pockets full of lichens and seeds. I slept as never before, a stone on the river bed, nothing between me and the white fire of the stars but my thoughts, and they floated light as moths among the branches of the perfect trees. All night I heard the small kingdoms breathing around me, the insects, and the birds who do their work in the darkness. All night I rose and fell, as if in water, grappling with a luminous doom. By morning I had vanished at least a dozen times into something better.

"I frequently tramped  
eight or ten miles through  
deepest snow to keep  
an appointment with a  
beech-tree, or a yellow  
birch, or an old  
acquaintance  
among the pines."

~ Henry David Thoreau

"There is always Music  
amongst the trees in the  
Garden, but our hearts must  
be very quiet to hear it."

~ Minnie Aumonier