

TODAY'S
MARCH 2



WITCH
VOL. 2 ISS. 5

OSJARA



Interview With Rhonda Alin

Ex-Libris Featuring Roderick Edwards' Viking Stock

Feature articles on Ostara

The Witch's Pyramid Explained

TODAY'S WITCH

MARCH 2025

The information covered in this Magazine is comprised of various sources from the Pagan community. We endeavor to cover topics from all traditions, and to be inclusive. The information provided is to be considered factual based on the research of the various authors represented therein. If there is any contradictory information, please feel free to contact the author of the article. We hope that everyone can enjoy the magazine and also learn from it. If there is a topic you wish to see also contact us and we'll be happy to try to include it in a future issue.

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Publishing Data

Publication Date(s)); Monthly on first of every month.

Deadlines for Submission: Due on 10th of each month prior to print.

Publication Area: Continental United States, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam.

Shelf Life: Perpetual, Collectable Magazine.

Supplements: Puzzle book (SC) 150pg; Witches' Traveling Companion (SC) \$7.95 with a yearly subscription.

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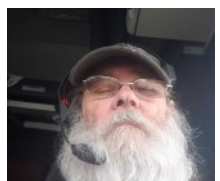


Meet the Staff



Edward Sott (CEO)

Edward Sott is a Theologian and Historian and runs a Non-profit organization. And he's a military Veteran. He was since childhood inspired to write novels and plays. He currently resides in Pennsylvania and has traveled throughout the world. He is the founder and CEO of Covered Bridge Press LLC, and of "Today's Witch" Magazine. His goal is to educate the public and bring traditionalism back to the craft and its practices. He is an Alexandrian Wiccan High Priest and Elder.



David Larsen (Sales and Marketing Dir.)

David Larsen is an over the Road Commodities Relocation Engineer, (AKA truck driver) He is also a history buff and a word smith. He currently resides in Florida and wherever the road and his dog Joey might take him. He is also world traveled from his military experience and driving. David is Co-Author with Edward Sott of Two Novels A Time for Redemption and A time for Retribution he is also A Vice President of Covered Bridge Press, LLC and a member of the Board of Directors of "Today's Witch" magazine. He is an open-minded Christian and Friend of the Pagan Community. He understands the value of spiritualism.



Earl Williams (Hum. Res. Director)

My name is Rev. Earl Williams. I have been in the pagan community for 20 years, holding a position as an ordained minister for 17 of those years. I am currently the Human Resources manager for Covered Bridge Press. I am happy and honored to also be a part of the new publication, "Today's Witch" magazine, due to be released mid-October of 2023.



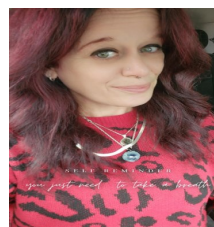
Melina Valdejo (Staff Writer/Asst. Director)

Being interested in many traditions and "finding the gold" in each one, Melina labels herself as an Eclectic and enjoys the concept of the "Spiritual Mosaic" as stated by Thomas Ashely-Farrand. Her strengths lie in personalizing her Spiritual path. As a Priestess of the Well of Avalon, she enjoys finding unique, practical approaches to situations and magickal workings drawing from her direct inspiration and her ever-widening background. "By putting ourselves in alignment with deity we can rise above situations and find our true path, we are all 'in the process'". Melina is the owner of Pathways New Age Books & Gifts, a brick-and-mortar resource center honoring all traditions located in St Louis, Missouri. If you're a traveling author or artist, please contact her at Mei-ina@pathwaysstl.com to get details on how to present at her shop.



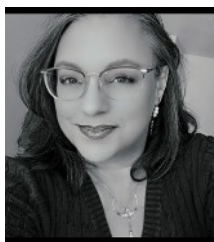
Emily Thornton (Managing Editor)

My name is Emily Thornton (Emma Gardner) and I have my Masters in Journalism. I love editing work and working with others. I have written numerous articles along with having my own column with local newspapers for over 10 years. Even though I grew up in a fairly religious household, I have always felt a love of nature and the metaphysical. I have an affinity for green magic and I love reading tarot for people around me. I even opened my own little side business called Celtic Readings, Oils and Sundries. I love stories and providing perspective to people at a crossroads. I work with Brigid mainly, but love the Celtic pantheon of deities.



Zannah Matejak (Social Media Director)

Hello my name is Zannah & I've been a practicing gray witch for 25 years. Initiated Norse shaman. I am a Yoni practitioner, I own a apothecary and metaphysical store. I am a wealth of knowledge of the occult and mythologies as well as a healer in a wide variety of modalities. I love to teach and building online communities on social media. Very passionate with what I do, I am an eclectic pagan who never gets enough knowledge.



Christina Aul (Resident Crone/Staff Writer)

Is a silent partner of the UPC/PRCC who has been active in the online Pagan community for over 20 years. She is a writer, educator, and instructional designer who shares her home in Pennsylvania with her spouse and adult child, three dogs, two cats, and several previous residents of the property. She is a solitary Welsh-Celtic pagan with ancestral roots in Scotland, Ireland, and Norway. Raised in the United Methodist Church, Christina began exploring alternative faiths in her teens and thoroughly deconstructed from Christianity in her early 20s. She considers herself a green kitchen witch and enjoys the oddities of life.

"Lord of the Spring and budding new life, I welcome the growth and beauty that you bestow upon the greening land"

Letter From the Editor

Hello Dear Readers:

It's now the time for Ostara and more things are coming forth into fruition for our magazine. This of course means even more things for you as well dear reader.

First as you know we announced in our last issue that there will be a price increase. This is only two dollars more than it was before. The reason of course is the rising cost of postage. However, because of this we are also going to be increasing the amount of pages of content we are offering. So we intend to give you the full value for your buck.

In other news. We are in process of translating our magazines into six foreign languages. DUTCH, FRENCH, ITALIAN, GERMAN, CASTILIAN SPANISH, and RUSSIAN. These foreign editions will be available for the time being on our website in digital copy only. The cost will be \$11.95 per pdf. Bearing the response we receive from this we may take the foreign editions also into print.

We are also going to be starting up a Patreon service soon. So if you wish to become a patreon member we will announce when it's available

We also are proud to announce that we are going to be hosting Pagan's Against Trafficking until it can establish it's own website and we will continue to support this fine organization and it's purpose. Any information that you need regarding this organization and how you can support and help in it and become part of it, you can get directly from us. Please contact me via phone or email for the information, my phone number is 570-534-7628 and the email is contactus@coveredbridgepress.com we will be happy to assist you in this matter, please place in the subject PAT—What can I do to help?

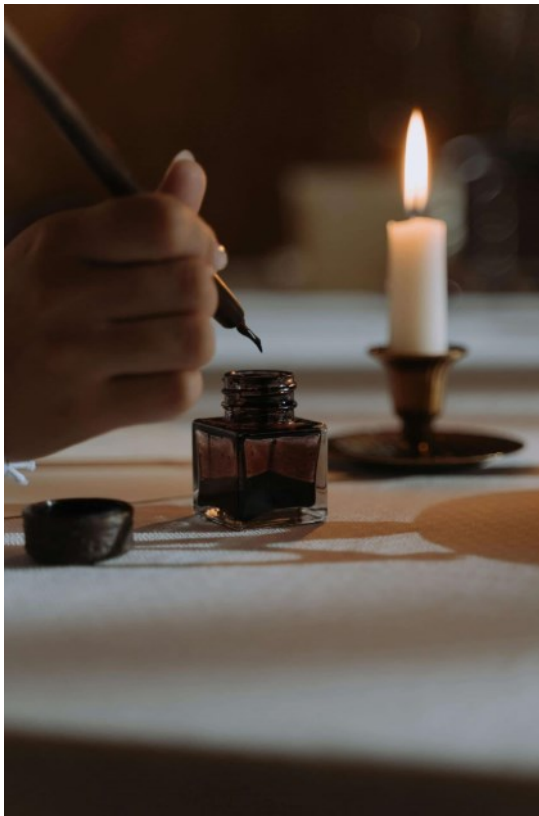
Thank you all for reading and being a part of our family and may the God and Goddess guide bless and protect you all this 2025 Edward Sott CEO Today's Witch Magazine. <https://todayswitch.net> contactus@todayswitch.net

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Sabbat Correspondence

Ostara

Other Names:	Eostre's Day, Spring Equinox, Vernal Equinox, Alban Eiber, Bacchanalia, Lady Day
Symbols:	Egg, New Moon, Butterflies/Cocoons
Colors:	Pink, Yellow, Grass Green, All Pastels, Robin's Egg Blue
Deities:	Youthful and Virile Gods and Goddesses
Activities:	Dying Eggs, Looking for Spring Growth
Taboos:	Breaking Eggs, Travel, Hunting Small Game
Animals:	Rabbits, Hares, Snakes
Stones:	Aquamarine, Rose Quartz, Moonstone
Foods:	Eggs, Honey, Hot Cross Buns
Plants:	Crocus, Daffodil, Ginger, Irish Moss, Jasmine, Snowdrop
Meanings:	Balance, End of Winter (non-Celtic), God and Goddess in Youth, Light Overtaking Dark, New Life/Rebirth
Attunement Teas:	Dandelion, Egg Drinks, Hyssop, Linden
Ritual Oils:	Ginger, Lotus, Magnolia
Mythological Creatures:	Merpeople, Pegasus, Unicorn
Key Action(s):	Begin, Open
Goddesses:	<i>All Virgin Goddesses, All Goddesses of Love, All Moon Goddesses, All Androgynous Deities, Some Fertility Goddesses, Anna Fearina, Aphrodite, Astarte, Athena, Coatlicue, Cybele, Doda, Eostre, Erce, Eriu, Flidais, Gaia, Garbhog, Hera/Juno, Ishtar, Iris, Isis, Lady of the Lake, Libera, Madhasri, Marku, Melusine, Minerva, Moon Mother The Muses, Ova, Persephone, Renpet, Rheda, Salamaona, Venus, Vesna, Vesta.</i>
Gods:	<i>All Gods of Love, All Moon Gods, Some Fertility Gods, All Gods of Song and Dance, Adonis, Attis, Cernunnos, Dagda, Dauh, Dylan, Gwali, The Great Horned God, Lord of the Greenwood, Mithras, Odin, Osiris, Ovis, Pan.</i>



Magickal Recipes for March

-By Melina Valdejo, owner, Pathways New Age Books

Ostara's Enchanted Spring Risotto

Below is a recipe for Ostara's Enchanted Spring Risotto, a hearty main dish that celebrates the renewal and balance of the Spring Equinox. This dish is not only nourishing but is also imbued with the magical symbolism of each ingredient, making it a perfect centerpiece for your Ostara celebrations.

Ingredients, Measurements & Correspondences

~ **Arborio Rice** (1 cup) As the heart of the risotto, Arborio rice symbolizes nourishment and the cyclic nature of life. Its ability to absorb liquid slowly mirrors the gradual unfolding of new growth and potential during springtime.

~ **Vegetable Broth** (4 cups, warmed) The broth represents the fluidity and abundance of life. Warming it slowly brings to mind the gentle, yet steady, return of the sun's energy as winter fades.

~ **Dry White Wine/non-alcoholic white wine** (1/2 cup) Wine is a symbol of transformation and celebration. Its incorporation into the risotto signifies the alchemy of change.

~ **Saffron Threads** (a generous pinch) Saffron lends a brilliant golden hue to the risotto and is associated with prosperity and the radiant energy of the sun. It acts as a beacon of light, mirroring the equinox's balance of day and night.

~ **Fresh Asparagus** (1 bunch, cut into 1-inch pieces) As one of the first vegetables to appear in spring, asparagus is a powerful emblem of renewal and vitality. Its crisp texture and vibrant color serve as a reminder of Spring.

~ **Fresh Green Peas** (I've also used frozen) (1 cup) Peas are a symbol of fertility and abundance, representing the promise of new beginnings and the rapid growth that characterizes the season.

~ **Baby Spinach** (1 cup) This leafy green stands for transformation and rejuvenation. Spinach's deep, fresh green color reflects the heart of spring, encouraging us to embrace personal renewal.

~ **Sliced Mushrooms** (1 cup, such as cremini or button) Mushrooms connect us to the mysteries of the earth. Their earthy flavor and texture ground the dish, reminding us of our deep connection to nature's hidden wonders.

~ **Yellow Onion** (1 small, finely chopped) Onions offer layers of insight and protection, symbolizing clarity and the unveiling of truth. Their warmth in the dish mirrors the emerging light of spring.

~ **Garlic** (3 cloves, minced) Garlic is renowned for its protective and healing properties. It infuses the risotto with an energetic punch that wards off negativity and nurtures the spirit.

~ **Lemon** (zest and juice of 1) The bright, cleansing qualities of lemon evoke clarity and purification. Its zest and juice add a burst of refreshing energy, enhancing the dish's balance.

~ **Extra Virgin Olive Oil** (2 tablespoons) Olive oil is used in many rituals for anointing and blessing. It symbolizes smooth flow, prosperity, and the sacred essence that binds all the ingredients together.

~ **Fresh Herbs** (a handful of basil and parsley, roughly chopped) Basil represents love and prosperity, while parsley is linked with protection and purification. These herbs add a final dash of fresh energy, signifying the bounty and healing power of nature.

~ **Sea Salt & Freshly Ground Black Pepper** (to taste) Salt is a time-honored purifier and preserver, grounding the dish with the wisdom of the earth. Black pepper brings energy, ensuring a balanced flavor.

Directions:

1. In a medium saucepan, gently warm the vegetable broth over low heat.
2. In a large, deep skillet or heavy-bottomed pan, heat the extra virgin olive oil over medium heat. Add the finely chopped yellow onion and sauté until it becomes soft and translucent. Then, introduce the minced garlic, stirring until fragrant.
3. Add the Arborio rice to the pan, stirring thoroughly to coat each grain in the infused olive oil. Allow the rice to toast lightly for about 2–3 minutes.
4. Pour in the dry white wine, stirring continuously as the liquid evaporates and melds with the rice. Sprinkle in the saffron threads, stirring gently.
5. Begin adding the warmed vegetable broth to the rice, one ladleful at a time. Stir gently and patiently, allowing each addition to be absorbed before adding more. This slow cooking process encourages the rice to become luxuriously creamy.
6. When the rice is about halfway through its cooking process (approximately 10 minutes in), add the fresh asparagus pieces and sliced mushrooms. Continue stirring, adding more broth as needed, until the rice is nearly al dente.
7. In the final 3–4 minutes of cooking, gently fold in the fresh green peas and baby spinach. These ingredients should retain their crispness.
8. Once the rice reaches a creamy, al dente consistency, remove the pan from heat. Stir in the lemon zest and freshly squeezed lemon juice. Season with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste, ensuring that the flavors are balanced.
9. Plate the risotto in deep bowls and sprinkle the chopped fresh basil and parsley over the top. As you garnish, take a moment to offer gratitude for the bounty of the season and the transformative journey of each ingredient. Consider this final step as the ritual sealing of your dish—a tangible expression of hope, balance, and renewal.

*By moon's glow and Sun's light,
Equal day and equal night,
Sleeping seeds I call you forth,
Bring healing, vitality, love and mirth.
Blessed Be!*



Ostara's Enchanted Berry Tart

Below is a recipe for Ostara's Enchanted Berry Tart, a divine dessert that captures the luminous energy of the Spring Equinox. This sweet indulgence is also imbued with potent magical correspondences, making it a perfect finale to your Ostara celebrations.

Ingredients, Measurements & Correspondences

For the Tart Crust:

- ~ **Almond Flour** (1 ½ cups) Symbolizes nourishment and the fertile earth; it grounds your creation in the promise of new beginnings.
- ~ **Coconut Oil** (½ cup, melted) Represents purification and unity, dissolving negativity to pave the way for fresh, radiant energy.
- ~ **Honey** (2–3 tablespoons) Infuses the crust with the golden warmth of the returning sun and the sweetness of abundance.
- ~ **Sea Salt** (a pinch) A time-honored purifier that balances and protects, ensuring harmony in your dish.
- ~ **Vanilla Extract** (1 teaspoon) Evokes transformation and joyful renewal, enhancing the magical aura of your foundation.

For the Filling:

- ~ **Mascarpone Cheese** (8 oz) Embodies rich, nurturing energy, providing a creamy canvas upon which new dreams can blossom.
- ~ **Greek Yogurt** (½ cup) Brings clarity and balance, its refreshing tang harmonizing the luxurious filling.
- ~ **Honey** (2 tablespoons) Sweetens the mixture once more, inviting abundance and the light of spring into every bite.
- ~ **Lemon Zest & Juice** (from 1 lemon) Cleanses and invigorates, offering a burst of clarity akin to the first rays of dawn.
- ~ **Vanilla Extract** (½ teaspoon) Deepens the filling's enchantment, uniting all elements in a subtle dance of renewal.

For the Topping

- ~ **Fresh Mixed Berries** (1 ½ cups; strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries) Are the jewels of spring, bursting with color and the fertile essence of creative abundance.
- ~ **Edible Flowers** (a handful) Add delicate beauty and artistic inspiration, as nature's own brushstrokes upon your tart.
- ~ **Fresh Mint Leaves** (a few, for garnish) Offer a refreshing burst of clarity, crowning your creation with invigorating energy

Directions

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). In a medium bowl, combine the almond flour, melted coconut oil, honey, sea salt, and vanilla extract. Stir until a cohesive dough forms.

Press the dough evenly into a 9-inch tart pan with a removable bottom, ensuring full coverage of the base and sides. Bake for 12–15 minutes or until lightly brown. Remove from the oven and allow the crust to cool completely,

2. In a separate bowl, gently whisk together the mascarpone cheese, Greek yogurt, honey, lemon zest, lemon juice, and vanilla extract until smooth.

3. Once the crust has cooled, spread the filling evenly over its surface. Arrange the mixed berries on top of the filling. (Try creating a design that relates to Ostara!)

Scatter the edible flowers over the berries and garnish with fresh mint leaves (if desired).

4. For a final touch, drizzle a light stream of extra honey over the tart to seal in the sweetness and prosperity of your creation. Step back and offer gratitude for the bounty of nature and the transformative journey of each ingredient.

By moon's glow and sun's light,

Equal day and equal night,

Berries and blooms, I call you forth,

Bring sweetness, clarity,
and joyful rebirth.

Blessed Be!



March 2025 - The Full Moon and the Turning of the Wheel at Ostara

By Melina Valdejo, owner, Pathways New Age Books

As we step into March, the Wheel of the Year turns toward balance and renewal. This month brings Ostara, the Vernal Spring Equinox, and a powerful full moon that illuminates our path forward. For some, the Vernal Equinox is the beginning of a new year as we begin to emerge from the blanket of winter and look forward to the growing light, fertility, and fresh beginnings that come with the season.

March's Full Moon – The Worm Moon

March's full moon, known as the **Worm Moon**, will occur on **March 14, 2025, at 2:56 a.m. CST**. This moon is named for the thawing of the earth, when worms and other creatures begin to stir beneath the soil, signaling the return of spring. Other names for this moon include the **Crow Moon**, **Sap Moon**, and **Lenten Moon**, all reflecting themes of awakening, nourishment, and preparation.

Our ancestors saw this time as one of transition, as the land softened, birds returned, and the first green shoots appeared. Just as the earth stirs, so do our spirits, encouraging us to set intentions for growth and renewal. This full moon is an excellent time for spell work related to fertility, new beginnings, cleansing, and personal empowerment.

Ostara and the Balance of Light

Ostara, celebrated on or around March 19-21, occurs March 20th at 1:01 a.m. CST in 2025 and marks the Vernal Equinox—a time when day and night are equal. This festival, named for the Germanic goddess Eostre, embodies fertility, rebirth, and the balance of light and dark. It is the perfect moment to honor the return of warmth, plant seeds (both physically and spiritually), and embrace the energy of fresh starts.

Ancient traditions of Ostara included decorating eggs, a symbol of fertility and creation, and celebrating hares, which represented abundance and new life. Today, many Pagans honor this sabbat by tending gardens, performing renewal rituals, and focusing on harmony in their lives.

As the full moon illuminates our path during this sacred time, we are called to reflect on balance—between action and rest, giving and receiving, planning and doing. The Worm Moon amplifies these themes, reminding us that just as the earth awakens, so too should we nurture our own growth.

Some suggestions for celebrating the Snow Moon or Imbolc:

***Moonlight Meditation** – Sit beneath the full moon and visualize the energy of renewal filling your body. Set intentions for growth in all areas of your life. Meditating under the full moon is a powerful way to connect with its energies and channel them into personal transformation. You may choose to bring a journal, crystals, or a candle to enhance your practice. Focus on what you wish to cultivate in the coming months and breathe deeply as you release any lingering winter stagnation.*

As you meditate, consider calling upon lunar deities or spirit guides to assist in your journey. Speak affirmations aloud or in your mind, allowing the moon's energy to guide your words and emotions. By incorporating mindfulness and visualization, this practice can become a sacred ritual that aligns your energy with the season's renewal and balance.

***Egg Magick** – (I don't care how old you are, but decorating eggs is always fun.) Decorate eggs with symbols of abundance and fertility, then bury them in the soil to bless the coming season. The egg, a universal symbol of fertility and new beginnings, has been used in magickal practices for centuries. By decorating eggs with sacred symbols, sigils, or colors corresponding to your intentions, you can infuse them with energy to manifest prosperity, love, and protection. Use natural dyes made from herbs like turmeric (for prosperity) or beetroot (for love) to deepen your connection with nature.*

Once your eggs are prepared, take a moment to meditate on your desires for the coming season before burying them in the earth. This simple yet potent ritual blesses the soil and invites abundance into your life. If you do not have access to outdoor space, you can place the decorated eggs in a small indoor planter to symbolize new growth and intention setting.

Spring Cleaning Ritual – Cleanse your home with herbs like lavender and rosemary, clearing out stagnant energy to welcome fresh opportunities. Spring cleaning is more than just a physical act; it is a magickal process of clearing away old energy to make space for new blessings. Begin by opening windows to allow fresh air to circulate, carrying away any negativity that has settled over the winter months. Burn incense, diffuse essential oils, or sprinkle a cleansing herbal blend in the corners of your home to purify and uplift the space.

As you clean, set an intention for each room, visualizing it being filled with light, warmth, and positive energy. Focus on what you want – not on what you don't. You might also place protective charms or crystals like black tourmaline and selenite in key areas (above door frames, in window sills, etc) to maintain the vibrational shift. When the cleansing is complete, light a candle to seal the ritual, welcoming in harmony and renewal.

Garden Blessing – If weather allows, plant new seeds or tend to your indoor plants, infusing them with love and intentions for prosperity. Working with plants is one of the most natural ways to connect with Ostara's energy, as it aligns with the themes of rebirth and growth. Even if it is too early to plant outdoors, you can start seedlings indoors or tend to houseplants, speaking words of encouragement and gratitude as you care for them.

Consider performing a simple blessing ritual by anointing seeds with moon water before planting them. Choose easy to grow herbs that align magickally with your intentions. As you place them in the soil, visualize them growing strong and healthy, much like the goals and dreams you are manifesting. Tending to plants throughout the season will serve as a reminder of your own inner growth, helping you stay connected to your intentions.

Bonus suggestion: Offerings to Nature – Leave offerings of honey, flowers, or seeds to honor the changing season and the spirits of the land.

March Full Moon Journal Prompts

The Worm Moon

- What is beginning to stir within you, much like the earth awakening? Reflect on any new passions, interests, or ideas that have surfaced recently. How can you nurture them?
- What new ideas or projects are ready to emerge? Consider writing out a plan to bring them into reality and what steps you can take to support their growth.

Balance and Renewal

- Where in your life do you need more balance? Identify areas where you may be overextending yourself or neglecting important aspects of your well-being.
- What areas need renewal, and how can you nurture them? Whether it's relationships, career goals, or personal habits, think about how you can refresh and realign.

Ostara and Growth

- What seeds (physical, emotional, or spiritual) do you want to plant this season? Consider setting goals or making commitments to personal development.
- How can you embrace more joy and abundance in your daily life? List small actions you can take to cultivate positivity and gratitude.

Cleansing and Letting Go

- What old habits or energies do you need to release? Write about patterns or beliefs that no longer serve you and how you can move forward.
- How can you create space for new blessings to enter your life? Explore ways to clear your physical, emotional, and spiritual space for fresh opportunities.

March's full moon and the festival of Ostara remind us that we are part of nature's great cycle of renewal. As you walk through this month, embrace the balance of light and dark, honor your own rebirth, and step into the season of possibility with an open heart.

~Blessed Be, Blessed We.

Through the Eyes of a Crone: Ostara

by Christina Aul

On April 20 this year, Christians around the world will celebrate Easter. According to their faith, this is the day their savior arose from a three-day stay in a tomb and signifies the hope for a savior of humankind.

Why is it called Easter? Why is it celebrated on some movable date in Spring? What does the Welsh Celtic neo-Pagan Crone have to say about a Christian holiday, anyway? A lot, actually— but first, let's take a deep breath and balance.

Can you balance on one foot? It's an agility and fitness measurement for folks of a certain age. I, who have had surgery on both feet cannot pass this "test" of fitness. Can you balance a knife point on your finger? How about spinning plates on a stick above your head? Silly, I'm sure, but as we talk about Easter, Eostre, and Ostara, keep that balance in mind. And remember to breath.

The Venerable Bede first mentions Eostre in the 8th century when describing a pagan spring festival. The name Eostre is associated with a Germanic or Saxon goddess, who is, in turn, associated with dawn, spring, and, of course fertility. . In this, She is closely tied to the Maiden aspect of modern paganism's various triple goddesses. Like so many other names, Christendom borrowed the concept, and a Goddess became a day, and a reborn god took the day of Easter.

But before Easter, there is Ostara. Agricultural societies marked the sun's passage with great care, and the spring equinox was a cause of celebration. It is, after all, the fulfillment of the possibility of Yule and the continuation of the assurances of Imbolc. With Ostara, the promise of light is fulfilled, and the days will only grow longer from here. The dark times of winter truly end when Ostara comes. (Remember, balance. Deep breath. We're only getting started.)

This crone has found a source of free pallets and will be making new raised garden beds and even starting a chicken coop in the coming weeks, Pennsylvania weather permitting. I'm looking forward to getting my fingers in the dirt again, as it's been a few years. But these things take time, and even if my garden grows perfectly and my chickens stay healthy, it will be some months before I see these come to fruition. I will need to guard my efforts from snakes, foxes, hawks, rabbits, deer, local cats, and occasional stray dogs.

The eggs from those chooks, coming later in the year, will remind me of Ostara and the promised fertility it brings. The deer and rabbit may render the garden harvest smaller, but their stolen meals will fatten the game, and I can then harvest that game later in the year (a vegan, I am not). Should a chicken fail to lay, they will provide a frozen carcass to save for later days and make into chicken soup to warm the body and soul. Their bones will go to bone meal fertilizer for the garden next year, and the cycle continues. Balance in all things. Deep breath. Did you forget?

The greater and lesser sabbats are the times of change, of flux. I imagine the year's wheel groaning as it makes the next turn, inertia begrudgingly conquered by the unrelenting passage of time. So we must all lean into the flux, this change. The ancient Christians even adapted to this resistance to change by aligning their Easter celebration and its stolen name with the equinox, keeping a safe distance on the calendar, of course. Gone are the old ways, and the old ways shall come again.

Change is scary, no matter who you are or how resilient you think you are. There is an element of fear and hesitation when faced with any but the most insignificant shifts in being. Navigating change is a matter of education (not strictly formal tutoring), patience, clear communication, and a willingness to sometimes hurt and be hurt amongst this change (I'm not a Wiccan either).

When we approach this fearful change, the path forward lies through balance. Kabbalah and ceremonial magic teach us about the twin pillars of Justice and Mercy. Our own rituals may have the phrase "in perfect love and perfect trust," and it is with that mindset that we navigate between those pillars. Balance, deep breaths, patience, and communication will get us through the sometimes hurtful and almost always scary changes to come. Perfect love and perfect trust will allow us to shelter and protect the vulnerable among us and bring us all into brighter days, no matter the depth of the darkness we're coming from.

Watch the bunnies and the fawns as they emerge soon from the woodlands and fields near you. They are vulnerable, tasty prey and seem so fragile! Baby birds and fox kits, new kittens born after the longer days bring on the mother cat's estrus – all so tiny and frail at first. Hawks and snakes watch, waiting for the slightest mistake to swoop in for breakfast. But look behind the babies. A mother, grandmother, or both stand ready to protect them to their last breath. Have you ever seen a bunny fight? These fluffy things will do some damage!

It is a phenomenon of climate science that the coldest times of the night are just before dawn, and the most frigid days fall after the planet shifts toward spring and summer. It takes time for the earth to cool, so we have 80-degree days in October. It also takes time for Gaia to wake and warm again, so we have frigid days in March. Increased sun does not mean increased warmth; the way ahead may still be cold.

This crone is here to tell you that your ancestors have your back, and they have been through worse. Lean into their wisdom, turn from their prejudices, and balance the old ways with the new. And don't forget to breathe.

A Dictionary of Angels

A'Albiel—Ailaoias

A'ALBIEL **לאיבילא** an angel in the service of the archangel Michael.

AARIEL ("אריאל" Lion of God") the name of an angel found inscribed on an Ophitic (gnostic) amulet alongside the name of the god Ialdabaoth.

ABA **אבא** an angelic luminary concerned with human sexuality and who may be invoked in cabalistic magical rites. Aba serves as a ministering angel to Sarabotes (who is Friday ruler of the angels of the air).

ABABALOY **אבאלבא** an angel invoked in Solomonic incantation operations. Ababaloy is mentioned in the black-magic manual, *Grimorium Verum*.

ABACHTA (**ABAGTHA**) **אבאכחא** in rabbinic writings on eof the 7 angels of confusion, the other 6 being Barbonah (Harbonah) Bigtha, Carcas, Biztha, Mehuman, and Zether. Abachta is also numbered among the "pressers of the winepress."

ABADDON **אבדאן** (Abaddon, the "Destroyer") The Hebrew name for the Greek Apollyon, "angel of the bottomless pit," As in Rev. 9:10; and the angel (or star) that binds Satan for 1,000 years, as in Rev. 20. The Thanksgiving Hymns (a copy which turned up among the recently discovered Dead Sea Scrolls) speaks of "the Sheol of Abaddon" and of the "torrents of Belial [that] burst into Abaddon." The 1st-century apocryphon "The Biblical Antiquities of Philo" speaks of Abaddon as a place (sheol, hell), not as a spirit or demon or angel. In *Paradise Regained* (IV, 624) Milton likewise employs Abaddon as the name of a place, ie., the pit. As far as is known, it was St. John, who first personified the term to stand for an angel. In the 3rd-century Acts of Thomas, Abaddon is the name of a demon, or of the devil himself—which is how Bunyan regards him in *Pilgrim's Progress*. According to Mather's, *The Greater Key of Solomon*, Abaddon is a name for God that Moses invoked to bring down the blighting rain over Egypt. The cabalist Joseph be Abraham Gikatilla denominates Abaddon as the 6th lodge of the 7 lodges of Hell, under the presidency of the angel Pasiel. Klopstock in *The Messiah* calls Abaddon "Death's dark angel". A reference to Abaddon's "hooked wings" occurs in Francis Thompson's poem "To the English Martyrs". Abaddon has also been identified as the angel of death and destruction, demon of the abyss, and chief of demons of the underworld hierarchy, where he is equated with Samael or Satan.

ABALIDOTH **אבאלידא** A celestial luminary who, like the angel Aba is concerned with human sexuality. Abalidoth is a minister-angel serving King Sarabotes, Friday ruler of the angels of the air.

ABAN **אבן** in ancient Persian lore, Aban is (or was) the angel of the month of October. He governed also the 10th day of that month.

ABARIEL **אבאריאל** in ceremonial magic tracts an angel used for invoking. The name Abariel is found on the 2nd pentacle of the moon.

ABASDARHON **אבסדרחון** Supreme ruling angel of the 5th hour of the night.

ABATHAR MUZANIA **אבאחר מוזאניא** is a demiurge mentioned in the literature of Mandaeism. He is described as having the responsibility of weighing the souls of the deceased to determine their worthiness using a weighing scale. He is also described as being the angel of Polaris.

ABAY **אבא** an angel of the order of dominations (dominions), invoked in cabalistic conjuring rites.

ABBADONA **אבאדאנא** A fallen angel, a seraph at one time the chosen companion of the faithful Abdiel. Abaddona, not wholly committed to the rebellion and constantly bemoaning his apostasy, is called "The penitent angel".

ABBATON **אבאטאן** name of God or of a holy angel employed in Solomonic conjurations to command demons.

ABDIEL **אבדיאל** ("servant of God")-the earliest traceable reference to Abdiel as an angel is in *The Book of the Angel Raziel*, a Jewish cabalistic work of the Middle Ages written in rabbinic Hebrew, the authorship credited to Eleazar of Worms. In *Paradise Lost* V, 805, 896, Abdiel is the "flaming seraph" who routs Ariel, Arioc, and Rarniel (rebel angels among Satan's hosts) on the first day of fighting in Heaven. Satan himself reels from Abdiel's "mighty sword stroke." Milton hails the seraph as "faithful only hee; among innumerable false, unmov'd, Unshak'n, un-seduc'd" (896-897). West in *Milton and the Angels*, p. 124, states that Abdiel as an angel was invented by Milton; however, on p. 154, Professor West correctly points out that Abdiel is to be found in *The Book of the Angel Raziel* (op. lit.). In the Bible (I Chronicles), Abdiel is not the name of an angel but of a mortal, a Gedite, a resident of Gilead. This is doubtlessly the original source for the name. Abdiel figures as an angel in Anatole France's fictional *The Revolt of the Angels*. Here Abdiel is known as Arcade.

ABDIZRIEL (**ABDIZUEL**) **אבדיזריאל** in the cabala, one of 28 angels ruling the 28 mansions of the moon.

ABEDUMABAL (**BEDRIMULAE**) **אבדומאבאל** in the goetic tract *Grimorium Verum*, an angel invoked in magical prayer.

ABEL ("meadow") **אבלה** souls on arrival in Heaven are judged by Abel, who is one of 12 powers engendered by the god Ialdabaoth (9.v.). He is also of the angels of the 4th Heaven ruling on Lord's Day and invoked from the east. In *The Testament of Abraham* 13:11, Abel is the angel 66 before whom every soul must appear for judgment after Enoch, the heavenly scribe, fetches the book containing the record of the soul in question."

ABELECH (**HELECH**) **אבאלח** in occult lore, a name of God or of an angel invoked to command demons.

ABEZI-THIBOD ("father devoid of counsel") **אבזי תיבא** in early Jewish lore, Abezi-Thibod is another name for Samael, Mastema, Uzza, and Oth-r chief devils. He is a powerful spirit who fought Moses in Egypt, hardened Pharaoh's heart and assisted Pharaoh's magicians. He was drowned (with Rahab, 9.v.) in the Red (i.e., Reed) Sea. With Rahab, he shares the princedom over Egypt. In *The Testament of Solomon* (Jewish Quarterly Review, London, 1889, XI), Abezi is the son of Beelzeboul (Beelzebub) and the demon of the Red Sea: "I am a descendant of the archangel," he declares.

ABHEIEL **אבחיאל** one of the 28 angels' ruling the 28 mansions of the moon. ABIU **אביא** corresponding angel of Eiael

ABIRESSIA **אבירסיא** in gnostic lore, Abiressia is one of 12 powers engendered by the god Ialdabaoth

ABLATI **אבליא** Solomonic magical tracts, an angel invoked in the Uriel conjurations. He is "one of four words God spoke to his servant Moses," the other 3 words being Josta, Agla, and Caila.

ABOEZRA **אבועזרא** an angel so named in *The Book of Ceremonial Magic*-"the most holy Aboezra." He is invoked in the benediction of the Salt, as prescribed in the *Grimorium Verum*.

ABRAGATEH **אבראגרהא** spirit or angel invoked in Solomonic prayer by the Master of the Art

ABRASIEL **אבראסיאל** an angel of the 7th hour of the day, operating under the rulership of Barginiel

ABRAXAS **ססקרבא** (Abraxis, Abrasax, etc.)-in gnostic theogony, the Supreme Unknown; in Persian mythology, the source of 365 emanations. The name Abraxas is often found engraved on gems and used as an amulet, or for incantation. In the cabala, he is the prince of aeons. He is encountered in The Sword of Moses, The Book of the Angel Raxiel, and other tracts of magic and mysticism. According to the older mythographers, Abraxas is, or was, a demon, and placed with the Egyptian gods. The word "abracadabra" is reputedly derived from Abraxas. Originally it was a word expressing, in the gnostic system, the aeons or cycles of creation; in a deeper sense, it served as a term for God. The gnostic writer Basilides, who is said to have invented Abraxas, according to Forlong, Encyclopedia of Religions, claims that Abraxas was the archon-ruler of 365 Heavens, and acted as mediator between the animate creatures of the earth and the godhead.

ABRID **דיירבא** in occult lore, an angel of the summer equinox, effective especially as an amulet against the evil eye.

ABRIEL **לאירבא** one of the angels of (or formerly of) the order of dominations, invoked in cabalistic rites.

ABRIMAS **סמירבא** in angel invoked at the close of the Sabbath.

ABRUNAEL **לאנורבא** One of the 28 angels ruling over the 28 mansions of the moon.

ABUHAZA **הזחובא** in occultism, an angel ministering to Arcan, the latter being ruler of the angels of the air on Monday. He is subject to the West Wind.

ABUION **ניויובא** in The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses, and other occult work, an angel serving in the 2nd Heaven.

ABUIORI (Abuioro) **ירויבא** in ritual magic, a Wednesday angel resident in either the 2nd or 3rd Heaven (according to different sources). He is to be invoked from the north.

ABULIEL **לאילובא** Jewish occult lore, the angel in charge of the transmission of prayer. He is mentioned in Joffe and Mark, Great Dictionary of Yiddish Language I. Since he is not mentioned in Margouliath, Malache Elyo 11 (Heavenly Angels), or in any of the hechaloth tracts that have so far come to light, or in Trachtenberg, Jewish Magic and Superstition, or in any of Gershom Scholem's works, Abuliel cannot be regarded as an angel of great importance. The supreme angels of prayer are Akatriel, Metatron, Raphael, Sandalphon, Michael, and Sizouze. It is possible that Abuliel assisted one of the foregoing.

ABUZO HAR **הזחובא** one of the angels of the moon, serving on Monday and responsive to invocations in ritual magic.

ACHAIAH ("trouble") **היאחא** in the cabala, one of 8 seraphim; he is the angel of patience and the discoverer of the secrets of nature. His corresponding angel is Chous. For Achaiah's sigil, see Ambelain, La Kabbale Pratique, p. 260. In the New Testament, Achaiah is a Roman province. Paul visited the churches in that region.

ACHAMOTH **תומחא** one of the aeons, and a daughter of Pistis Sophia (9.v.). In Ophitic gnosticism, Achamoth is the mother of the evil god Ildabaoth.

ACHARTIEL and **ACHATHRIEL** **לאיתרחא** and **לאיתרחא** Angelic names found inscribed on oriental charms (kanreoth) for warding off evil.

ACHAZRIEL **לאירזכא** an angel who serves as usher in the celestial court

ACHELIAH **הילחא** an angel whose name is found inscribed on the 1st pentacle of the planet Venus

ACHIDES **סדיחא** his angel has his name inscribed on the 3rd pentacle of the planet Venus

ACHSAH **הסחא** a spirit of benevolence invoked in prayer by the Master of the Art in Solomonian conjurations

ACHUSATON **ותסוחא** one of 15 throne angels listed in The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses. For the names of all 15

ACIEL **לאיסא** one of the 7 underworld planetary subrulers, called Electors by Cornelius Agrippa, serving under the overlordship of the angel Raphael.

ACLAHAYE **הלקא** genius of gambling; also one of the genii of the 4th hour

ACRABIEL **לאיברקע** an angel governing one of the signs of the zodiac

ADABIEL **לאיבדא** in The Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels, one of the 7 archangels. Probably another form for Abdiel (q.v.). Adabiel has dominion over the planet Jupiter (other sources give Mars). He is sometimes equated with Zadkiel, or even with the king of Hades, Nergal.

ADADIYAH **הידדע** one of the more than 100 names of Metatron.

ADAM ("man") **אדא** in The Book of Adam and Eve I, 10, Adam is called "the bright angel." In Enroch 11, he is a "second angel." When he was created, Adam reached from "the earth to the firmament," according to the midrash Bereshith Rabba. In the cabala, Adam is the 6th sephira Tiphereth (meaning "beauty"), according to Pistorius. Adam's dust, declared Rabbi Meier, was gathered from all parts of the earth. Talmud records that Adam was originally androgynous and the exact image of God (Who was likewise conceived as androgynous). The story in The Apocalypse of Moses is that Adam was whisked to Heaven by Michael in a fiery chariot. Another legend is that he was fetched from Hell by Jesus and transported to Heaven along with the other saints in chains." Still another legend, recounted in the revelation of Moses (Ante-Nicene Fathers Library, 8) is that Adam was buried by 4 angels Uriel, Gabriel, Raphael, Michael. In Mathers, The Kabbalah Unveiled, the 10 sefirot, in their totality, represent or constitute the archetypal man, Adam Kadmon.

ADATIEL **לאיתדע** an air spirit invoked in ritual magic. In the goetic tract The Black Raven, Adatiel is pictured as habited in a "billowing black-and-white mantle," but in the Magia [Rf. Butler, Ritual Magic] he is pictured in a "billowing blue mantle."

ADEO **אדא** an angel of the order of dominations, according to The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses. Adeo is invoked in magical rites.

ADERNAHAEL (Adnachiell?) **לאהנרדא** his angel was given by God a magical formula, set down in an Ethiopian amulet, for the cure of colic and stomach trouble.

ADHAIION **היהדא** an angel of the Seal, invoked in conjuring rites

ADHAR **רדא** one of the many names of the angel Metatron

ADIEL **לאידע** in hechaloth lore (Ma'asseh Merkabah), an angelic guard of the 7th heavenly hall.

ADIMUS **סומידא** at a church council in Rome in 745 C.E., Adimus was one of a half-dozen reprobated angels, the others including Uriel (sic), Raguel, Simiel. The bishops who invoked these angels, or approved their veneration, were excommunicated

ADIR (Adiri, Adiron, Adi) **אדירא** an angel invoked in conjuring operations by a progressive shortening of his name; also one of the many names for God.

ADIRAEI ("magnificence of God:") **לארדא** one of the 49 spirits (once exalted) now serving Belzebub, subprince of Hell

ADIRAM **אדירא** an angel invoked in the benediction or exorcism of the Salt

ADIRIAH **האירדא** an angel resident in the 7th heaven.

ADIRIEL **לאירדא** an angel resident in the 5th Heaven, according to The Zohar

ADIRIR (ADIRION) (Adir, Adiron) **האירדא** angelic chief of "the might of God;" also a name for God. Adiririon is invoked as an amulet against the evil eye. He is said to be a guard stationed at one of the halls or palaces of the 1st Heaven. According to Margouliath, Malache Elyon, Adiririon may be equated with Adiriel [Rf: Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism; Trachtenberg, Jewish Magic and Superstition.] In Sefer Raziel (The Book of the Angel Raziel), Adirion or Adiririon is a "trustworthy healing-God, in whose hands are the Heavenly and earthly households."

ADJUCHAS **סהיציגדא** Genius of the rocks; also one of the genii of the 11th hour.

ADMAEL **לאעמדא** One of the 7 archangels with dominion over the earth. Admael is stationed, for the most part, in the 2nd Heaven

ADNACHIEL (Advachiel, Adernahael) **לאיחאנדע** angel of the month of November, with rulership over the sign of Sagittarius. Adnachiel alternates with Phaleg as a ruling angel of the order of angels

ADNAI ("pleasure") **דינע** an angel whose name is found inscribed on a pentacle of the planet Venus.

ADNAREL ("my lord is God") **לרנדא** in Enoch writings, one of the angelic rulers of one of the seasons (usually winter).

ADOIL ("hand of God") **ליודא** primordial essence or divine creature of light summoned out of the invisible depths and who, at God's command, burst asunder. This occurred (according to Enoch II) at the time Enoch was being shown around the 10 Heavens. Out of Adoil issued all things visible in the world. The name Adoil does not appear elsewhere than in Enoch II. R. H. Charles sees here a modification of the egg theory of the universe in ancient Egyptian myth.

ADONAEL **לאאנדא** in The Testament of Solomon, one of the 7 archangels and the only angel who is able to overcome the demons of disease, Bobel (Bothothel) and Metathiax.

ADONAETH **תנודא** by appealing to the angel Adonaeth, the demon Ichthion (who causes paralysis) can be routed.

ADONAI (Adonay "God") **יאנודא** One of the 7 elohim or angels of the presence (creators of the universe) in Phoenician mythology. Adonai is also an angel invoked in the conjuration of Wax (in Solomonic magic operations) and in exorcisms of fire. In Ophitic gnosticism, Adonai is one of 7 angels generated by Ildabaoth "in his own image". In the Old Testament, Adonai is another word for God, as "When I have mercy on the world, I am Adonai".

ADONAIOS (Adonaiu, Adoneus) **סוינודא** In the Ophitic (gnostic) system, one of the 7 archons or potentates that constitute the Hebdomad, rulers of the 7 Heavens; also one of the 12 powers engendered by the god Ildabaoth.

ADONIEL **לאינודא** in Waite, The Lemegeton, a chief officer angel of the 12th hour of the night, serving under Sarindiel. His name is found inscribed on the 4th pentacle of the planet Jupiter, along with the name of the angel Bariel. The pentacle is reproduced in Mather's, The Greater Key of Solomon, plate iv.

ADOTH **תודא** in The Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses, a cherub or seraph used in conjuring rites.

ADOYAHIEL **להיודא** in the cabala, a ministering throne angel. He is one of 15.

ADRAEL ("my help is God") **לארדא** an angel serving in the 1st heaven.

ADRAI **יארדא** an angel invoked in the conjuration of ink and colors.

ADRAM[M]ELECH[K] ("king of fire") **רלמרדא** one of 2 throne angels, usually linked with Asmadai. In demonography, Adramelch is 8th of the 10 archdemons; a great minister and chancellor of the Order of the Fly (Grand Cross), and order said to have been founded by Beelzebub. According to the rabbis, Adramalech manifests, when conjured up, in the form of a mule or a peacock.

ADRAPEN **פרדא** a chief angel of the 9th hour of the night, serving under Nacoriel.

ADRIEL ("my help is God") **לאירדא** One of the 28 angels ruling the 28 mansions of the moon. Adriel is also one of the angels of death. He is also one of the angelic guards of the gates of the South Wind. (also of the East Wind).

ADRIGON **גירדא** one of the many names of Metatron.

AEBEL **לבייא** one of 3 administering angels (the other 2 were Shetel and Anush) whom God appointed to serve Adam.

AEGLUN **גילגץ** genius of lightning and one of the genii of the 11th hour.

AEHAIAH **היהאא** one of the 72 angels bearing the mystical name of God Shemhamphorae.

AESHMA **המשא** the basis for Asmodeus. In Persian myth, Aeshma is one of the 7 archangels. The name is drawn, in turn, from the Zend Aeshmo daeva.

AF **רע** ("anger") one of the angels of destruction, a prince of wrath, and a ruler over the death of mortals. With Hemah, Af once swallowed Moses up to his "circumcised membrum" but had to disgorge him when Zipporah (Moses' wife) circumcised her son Gershom, thus appeasing God's wrath against the Law-giver who had, it appears overlooked the covenantally rite. Af resides in the 7th Heaven and is 500 parasangs tall. He is "forged out of chains of black and red fire.

AFAFIEL **ליפאפע** The names of the Benjamite chiefs are drawn, in part at least, from the list of the descendants of Benjamin in 1 Chron. 8, but they are so disfigured as to defy complete identification. The divisions and the orthography are alike incapable of being settled by the evidence before me. in hechaloth lore (Ma'asseh Merkabah), and angelic guard stationed at the 7th heavenly hall.

AF BRI **פא ירב** an angel who favors the people of Israel; he exercises control over rain.

AFFAFNIEL **לאינפא** a wrathful angel, prince of 16 faces (4 on each side of his head) that constantly change their aspect.

AFKIEL **לאיקפא** in hechaloth lore (Ma'asseh Merkabah) and angelic guard stationed at the 5th heavenly hall.

AFRIEL **לאירפא** (Afarof)--an angel of force (power?) who may be Raphael in another guise. In The Testament of Solomon he is reputed to possess the power of thwarting the machinations of the demon Obizuth, a female destroyer of children.

AFSI-KHOF **פא יספא** an angel who governs the month of Av (July-August)

AFTEMELOUCHOS according to a legend told in the Falasha Anthology, an angel of torment who in Heaven, carries a fork of fire on the river of fire.

AFTIEL **ליטפא** in rabbinic lore, the angel of twilight.

AGAD **גאדא** an angel of the order of powers. **AGAF** **גאפא** an angel of destruction invoked in ceremonial rites at the close of the Sabbath.

AGALMATUROD **דורטאמלגא** "a most holy angel of God" invoked in magical operations.

AGARES **גארגא** once of the order of virtues, Agares is now a duke in Hell, served by 31 legions of infernal spirits. He manifests in the form of an old man astride a crocodile and carrying a goshawk. He teaches languages and can cause earthquakes. According to legend, Agares was one of the 72 spirits Solomon is reputed to have shut up in a brass vessel and cast into a deep lake (or banished to "lower Egypt").

AGASON **גאסא** an angelic spirit invoked in Solomonic conjurations as "thy Most Holy Name Agason".

AGATHODAEMON **גאדאמון** in gnosticism, "the seven-voweled serpent [seraph], the Christ". Derived from the Egyptian serpent Agathodaimon, the good spirit, as opposed to Kakadai-mon, the evil spirit. Agathodaemon has also been designated a guardian angel or genius and identified with Hermes, "the bringer of good, the angel standing by the side of Tyche."

AGBAS **גבא** in hechaloth lore (Ma'asseh Merkabah), an angelic guard stationed at the 4th heavenly hall.

AGIEL לאיגא An angel's name found inscribed on the 1st pentacle of the planet Mercury. According to Paracelsus' doctrine of Talismans, Agiel is the presiding intelligence (i.e., spirit, angel) of the planet Saturn, acting in concert with the spirit Zazel.

AGKAGDIEL לאידגכגא in hechaloth lore (Ma'asseh Merkaba), an angelic guard stationed at the 7th heavenly hall.

AGLA הלגא in the cabala, and angel of the Seal invoked in conjurations of the Reed; also, a spirit invoked in Monday conjurations addressed to Lucifer. In the rites of exorcism, Agla is called on by lot, and here he is a magic word of power for the exorcism of demons. In addition Agla is a name of God that Joseph invoked when he was delivered from his brothers. Agla is a combination of the 1st letters of the 4 Hebrew words meaning "Thou art forever mighty O Lord" (atha gadol leolam Adonai)

AGLIBOL לובילגא is a Syrian god, originating from a north Syrian immigrant community. He is a moon god who was worshiped in the ancient Syrian city of Palmyra as part of a trinity alongside Bel and Yarhibol, and associated with the sun god Malakbel. Evidence of Aglibol's worship is primarily epigraphical. The earliest known mention of Aglibol was an inscription which dates back to 17 BC and associates him with the sun god Malakbel. Several other inscriptions made by the Bene Komare also associate him with Malakbel, including a bilingual inscription from 122 AD in which Aglibol and Malakbel sponsor a citizen by the name of Manai for his piety. Several 2nd century AD inscriptions attest that Aglibol was venerated with Malakbel in a sanctuary known as the "Sacred Garden" (gnt' 'ilym), which was one of the four principal sanctuaries of the city. The Bene Komare tended to this sanctuary. The sanctuary had two altars, a sacred cypress and a bath. One of the reliefs found in the Temple of Bel show the two altars and the two gods.

AGMATIA הטימגא an angel of unknown origin mentioned in Scholem.

AGNIEL לאינגא in The Zohar the 4th of the 10 unholy sefiroth.

AGRAT BAT MAHLAT טלחמ תב תרגא an angel of prostitution, one of the 3 mates of Samael. The other 2 mates are Lilith and Naamah.

AGROMIEL לאימורגא an angelic guard of the 6th Heaven.

AHA ההא an angel of the order of dominations; a spirit of fire used in cabalistic magical operations.

AHABIEL לאיבא an angel invoked in love charms.

AHADIEL לאידחא an angelic enforcer of the law.

AHADISS סידחא an angel who exercises dominion over the month of Heschwan (October-November).

AHAHA הההא an angel of the Seal, used in conjuring.

AHAU איהא a spirit of the planet Mercury, summoned up in ritual magic.

AHAMNIEL לאינמחא one of the chief angel-princes appointed by God to the Sword.

AHANIEL לאינחא one of the 70 childbed amulet angels, as listed in Margouliath.

AHARIEL לאירהא angelic ruler of the 2nd day, serving under Gabriel.

AHASSIOR רואיסחא angelic ruler of the month of Tebet.

AHAVIEL לאיבהא an angel's name found inscribed on an oriental Hebrew charm (kamea) for warding off evil.

AHIAH היחא (Hiyyah)- son of the fallen angel Semyaza. It should be pointed out that while angels, being pure spirits, cannot propagate their kind, fallen angels, being corrupt and demonic, are able to do so.

AHIEL לאיחא ("brother of God")- one of the 70 childbed amulet angels, and assistant to the angel Qaphsiel (Kafsiel), ruler of the 7th day.

AHMA'OL לע'חא in Arabic lore, a guardian angel invoked in rites of exorcism.

AHZARIEL לאירוחא an angel's name found inscribed on an oriental charm for warding off evil.

AIAVEL לביא one of the 72 angels governing the signs of the zodiac.

AIEL לייא an angel of the air, ruler on Lord's Day (Sunday), governor of one of the 12 Zodiacal signs (Aries). He is a resident of the 4th heaven and must be summoned from the north. He is one of the "fiery triplicities".

AILOAIOS in gnostic lore, ruler of the 2nd gate "leaning to the aeon of the archons."

The Runes

Berkana (bur-kan-a)

Sound:	"B"
Depiction:	The breasts of the Mother Goddess
Runic Position:	3rd Aett, 2nd Rune
Original Meaning:	The divine energy of the birch as Earth Mother

Key Words:	Nurturing, rebirth, growth, transition, spirit, concealment, protection, ancestry
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Tree: Birch

Herb: Lady's Mantle

Gemstone: All Gemstones

Color: Dark Green

Runic Half-Month: March 14—March 30

Hours of the Day: 5:30am—6:30am

Other Names: Germanic: *Bercna* (*Berkana*)

Norse: *Bjarkan*

Anglo-Saxon: *Beroc*

Icelandic: *Bjarkan*

Norwegian: *Bjarkan*

God/dess: Frigga, Holde

Power Animals: All Animals

Element: Earth

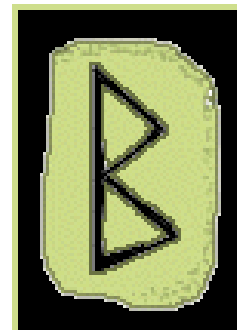
Numerological Value: "18"

Astrology: Virgo

Tarot: The Empress

Magickal Qualities:

- Works with feminine energies
- Understands the forces of transition
- Conceals and protects energy
- Revitalizes the spirit and personal empowerment
- Gathers and directs the powers of earth, air, and water
- Increases intuitive abilities
- Perfects magickal skills



Galdr Song: Berkana, Berkana, Berkana

Bu ba bi be bo

B e e e e e r r r r r

Burk, bark, birk, berk, bork

Ob be ib ab ub

B e e e e e r r r r r

Ogham-Bethlusian: Beith (*pr. Be'yeh*)

Quatrain: First of all hands to clutch the heavenly bole,
The grey-clad youngling seeks high learnings goal
A cloak of feathers will a bell-hung rod
He seeks to merit where his elders trod



Tarotscopes for March 2025

What a wild ride we are on with the stars. Things intensify as we move closer to April's shifts, but we can already feel the impending Mercury and Venus retrograde among other interesting once in many life time configurations.

Aries: The Star

Things should be getting back to your sense of normal this month, finding you being a lot more social and taking care of others in style. I feel you will do a lot of entertaining to make up for time lost over the past few months. Work issues should come into balance as well. In general things are looking' up. Aries is in the spotlight these next few months, so ride the wave.



Libra: Justice

This month calls for a situation to be brought to justice and this month's card is indeed just that. You should feel a real sense of virtue and balance for the coming season of growth. Remember not to gloat, but it is ok to be very pleased with yourself inside.



Scorpio: Judgement

This month retrograde Venus will be looming and slowing you down. If you can just hold on, things should ease. Money wise, things are looking up and some past debts should be taken care of. Like the Phoenix you too will overcome and see the dawn of a new day.



Taurus: 4 of Swords

With Venus (your ruling planet) retrograde pushing you, you will need to continue looking things over quite carefully before making any final decisions. You may find you have an abundance of unwanted alone time. Don't just waste it away feeling sorry for yourself. Use it to finish some old projects and get ahead of yourself for the holiday season.



Sagittarius: 3 of Pentacles

Getting ahead on the work front is what March is all about for you dear Sag. You will find things nicely falling into place and bills being paid. Also, things are getting done around the home that really make you more comfortable and at ease. You will be more than ready to face the coming interesting times.



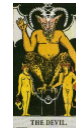
Gemini: Ace Of Swords

Things seem to be coming back into a manageable state of being. You may miss the Chaos a bit, seeing as it's become second nature to dance with it. Anyway, use this time to prepare for the Mercury retrograde, things will be a lot smoother for you if you prepare in advance to use your control wisely.



Capricorn: The Devil

Don't be tempted to answer to the aggression being sent your way. March brings challenges from people you really did not expect it from. Use your inner strength to calm and soothe the situation rather than rise up in anger. This will be difficult as Mars may oppose your sun. But really count to 10 or even 100 in order to keep your cool.



Cancer: 4 of Pentacles

You know that money you set aside for a rainy day? Well, this month it may be raining a lot. It seems there are some people that are just expecting to be taken care of, helped along and paid for. In true Cancerian style I feel you will not be able to say no. Whatever you do don't reveal the actual sum of your worth, keep some set aside for yourself.



Aquarius: 9 of Cups

Ahhh, the wish card, things are really looking up for you Aquarius. Perhaps this has something to do with Uranus and Saturn's work. March should be a great month all round. You may find yourself feeling a bit like the chosen one. Not to worry you can handle the pressure, especially if it means getting what you really want.



Leo: 8 of Swords

Just a bit longer dear Leo. I know things have been a tad on the stressful side to say the least. There are energies still willing to help you along, so use this energy to get ahead. You will find a way this month to settle some old issues and be ready to take on the coming spring with newfound enthusiasm.



Pisces: 2 of wands

Time to find out for yourself what makes you tick. March looks to be a time of real self-discovery. You have been in a difficult situation as of late and things could be coming to a head quite soon. How you handle this is totally up to you, really put some thought into it and be mindful of your Karma. I know you will do the right thing for the good of all. Best of luck.



Virgo: King of Pentacles.

Money seems to be coming in at a steady rate. Please be aware of this dear Virgo and use these gains to pay off some nagging debts. This would be a good month to do some debt consolidating or reorganising of accounts to get the best interest. You have turned the corner now financially. Things are looking up.





Ostara, the celebration of the Spring Equinox, marks the time of year when day and night stand in perfect balance, symbolizing renewal, fertility, and growth. As we honor the return of the Sun and the awakening of the Earth, crystals can be powerful tools to enhance our connection to the season's energy. Whether you use them in rituals, meditation, or altar decorations, here are some of the best stones to incorporate into your Ostara celebrations.

Green Aventurine – Stone of Growth & Prosperity



Green Aventurine is a perfect stone for Ostara as it resonates with the energy of new beginnings, luck, and abundance. It encourages personal growth, confidence, and prosperity, making it an excellent choice for setting intentions for the season ahead.

How to Use:

Carry Green Aventurine in your pocket for good luck.
Place it on your altar to attract growth and success.

Rose Quartz – Stone of Love & Compassion



Ostara is a time of renewal not just for the earth, but also for our relationships and self-love. Rose Quartz, with its gentle pink hue, embodies love, harmony, and emotional healing. It's perfect for cultivating kindness and embracing the fresh energy of spring.

How to Use:

Hold it during meditation to open your heart to new beginnings.
Keep it in your bedroom to enhance love and emotional balance

Clear Quartz – Stone of Clarity & Amplification



Clear Quartz is a master healer and energy amplifier. It can be programmed with your Ostara intentions and used to magnify the energy of other crystals. It symbolizes purity and the clarity that comes with the light of the growing sun.

How to Use:

Use it in a crystal grid to amplify seasonal energies.
Meditate with it to gain insight and clarity for your goals

Citrine – Stone of Sunshine & Manifestation



Citrine carries the warmth and radiance of the sun, making it an ideal stone for celebrating the return of light. It promotes joy, optimism, and motivation, which aligns beautifully with the themes of Ostara.

How to Use:

Place it in your workspace to inspire creativity and success.
Carry it to boost your confidence and energy levels.

Amethyst – Stone of Spiritual Awakening



Ostara is not only about physical renewal but also about spiritual growth. Amethyst's calming energy helps with intuition, higher consciousness, and balancing emotions, making it a wonderful stone for inner reflection.

How to Use:

Keep it on your altar to enhance spiritual awareness.
Meditate with it to promote balance and tranquility..

Moonstone – Stone of New Beginnings



Moonstone's gentle energy aligns with the themes of renewal, fertility, and intuition. It helps to balance emotions and encourages inspiration, making it a great stone for embracing the fresh starts that Ostara represents.

How to Use:

Carry it to encourage emotional balance and intuition.
Place it under your pillow to enhance dreams and insight..

Incorporating Crystals into Your Ostara Rituals

To harness the power of these stones during Ostara, consider the following:

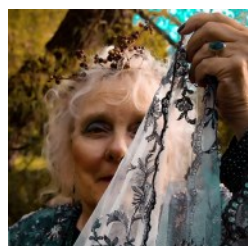
Create an Ostara Crystal Grid: Arrange the stones in a sacred pattern on your altar to attract the energy of renewal and balance.

Spring Equinox Meditation: Hold a chosen crystal and visualize new beginnings taking root in your life.

Crystal-Infused Water: Place a safe-to-use crystal (like Clear Quartz or Rose Quartz) in water overnight to create a charged elixir for drinking or anointing.

Decorate Your Altar: Arrange stones alongside fresh flowers, eggs, and candles to celebrate Ostara's vibrant energy.

By working with these crystals, you can align yourself with the season's transformative energy, inviting growth, balance, and fresh possibilities into your life. Happy Ostara!



Sue Sullivan founded her business, Howl at the Moon Gems, in 2000, driven by a lifelong passion for crystals and gems that began in childhood, with her maternal grandfather. He was her first teacher in the natural world and introduced her to the uses of herbs, tree woods, phases of the moon and stones, sparking her enduring interest. She holds a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Minneapolis School of the Arts and later pursued studies in Theology, becoming an ordained minister. In 2020 she earned a full Masters Diploma for her Crystal Practitioner Certification and is also an Usui Reiki Master/Teacher. Additionally, she serves on the board of The Gathering Grove where she is honored to be the Illuminator of Knowledge and Curriculum Director.

Today's Witch interview with Rhonda Alin

ED: Good afternoon, everybody. Welcome to Today's Witch interview with Rhonda Allin. It's my pleasure to have her here with us today. So, thank you Rhonda for being here.

Rhonda: I'm excited to be here. Thank you for having me.

ED: If you'd like to introduce yourself and give us a little background on your practices and your craft.

Rhonda: Absolutely! A little about me...my foray or my entrance into this work. Let's just say I grew up in a household where magical practices were pretty organic to the household. I'm a Scorpio sun and moon. My mom was also a Scorpio sun and while she would never consider or call herself witch, I called her a kitchen witch or green witch because she was always in her garden, or she was always cooking up something in the kitchen.

She had those little witches hanging from the windows in the kitchen. I still have one of those little witches. That's kind of the environment between her and my oldest brother, who was part of an African traditional religion that came out of New York in the late In the mid to late sixties.

We had that environment. I was reading his books when he was off at college. I'm the youngest of four. So that was the environment I grew up in. It was common to have things happening. There were crystals, candles, incense, and things of that nature. I had a fascination with cards, and I came into this whole world of magic and it's the world around me.

The magic in the world around me is through divination, primarily through tarot. That's my divination system, or my preferred system right now is actually tarot. In any case, which is where I focus a lot of my work right now. I have my own tarot practice. I teach tarot.

I've been a member of the Assembly of the Sacred Wheel, Cabot Kent Hermetic Tradition, Order of the Golden Griffin. I am a Priestess within that group, and I also do other things within the magical community. So, happy to be here.

ED: Well, I like tarot myself. I actually create tarot spells. That's always fun to do, you know. Images of the Tarot and figuring out spells behind them and building spells. That's fun to do all the time.

Rhonda: Absolutely.

ED: One of the things that I was curious about is being a practitioner in the craft and you grew up in it. That's awesome. I love the fact you grew up around candles and herbs and a whole and the whole shebang.

I grew up in the craft. One of the things that I've noticed in today's craft practices and neopaganism particularly, is a lack of traditional values. Everybody's up for the quick fix. They want to spell for everything, spell for nothing. And what is your belief on

actual spell work?

Do you believe that it's a necessity or do you think it's something that you can do only if mundane situations actually cannot work?

Rhonda: Oh, actually, this is so interesting. That's a fabulous question. Fabulous question. Language is one of the key communication challenges humans have in general, right?

We have this issue, we can go way, way back to biblical times in the Tower of Babel. The notion of language and diversity of language creating issues within communication. The notions of a spell. Sometimes when I speak to people who don't practice what I practice or who are, what we sometimes call muggles, whatever you want to call them.

People who aren't in that world, I usually have to change my language. I'll say to somebody who I know, practices a Christian tradition and I know that this is the path that they practice. I will often use the language, and I'll switch it around to say a prayer. Or I'll switch it around to say, I work with the energy around me, and I form a type of prayer so that in that way it's a language that they understand. Hopefully, they are not putting doors or walls up between what I'm trying to convey, and that they're at least hearing me.

Spell crafting or doing spell work for me is as simple as finding that thing that you're looking for when we say it (or verbalize it). We often hear this example of "I'm looking for a parking spot." or "I'm in the city or I'm in a very congested area in need of a parking spot. I need that parking spot." And you start doing this little mantra in your own head about, you know, the spot that we will be around the corner.

The spot will be around the corner. You start creating this little mantra and even that in itself with your intention is a spell for me. Spell work can be simple, or it can be very ornate just to preface that whole question. And it's interesting that you've started off today's discussion with that question.

I had a dream last night. I was with some people I was working with, and these are fictional dream people I've never worked with these people before. In the dream, there were people in my office and my manager practiced magic. They were all part of this group within the office, and they were saying, "Oh, we're going to go out and we're going to do some spell work."

And I understood them to mean they were actually going to cast a circle. I said, "Well, you're not actually doing spell work. You're just casting a circle right now. Isn't that what you're doing?" And it was a communication thing. She thought spell work was casting the circle. That was her understanding.

That was the way she was taught. Oh, when I cast a circle, I'm casting a spell. There's a whole lot we can talk about with that, but it's interesting. You started off the conversation today. I had that dream last night and it's been sitting in my head quite a bit today. The notion of spell work.

ED: Well, one of the things that I teach is that spells are nothing more than taking a subconscious idea, bringing them into conscious awareness so you can take the proper action to net the result.

Another issue is the misunderstanding of the spell work. It's not a case of, well, I'm going to twitch my nose and clean my house.

Rhonda: Samantha Stevens, although we like Samantha Stevens, which would be too easy and too nice, but no.

ED: But in this world of quick fixes, that's what everybody has a misconception of. That's what they believe in.

Rhonda: Yes.

ED: What are some of the other misconceptions that you've run into in your years of teaching and or working

Rhonda: The biggest thing and I recognize this, was also as a turning point in my own practice. Some years back it was all about recognizing that the work of magician, the work of the witch, the work of mage, or however you define yourself...If you're working with magic, the magic is not external to you, it is within you.

It's recognizing that what people often seek, as you were mentioning, people are looking for a spell for this, a spell for nothing, a spell for everything. Thinking that that quick thing, that they're going to have that quick fix. When indeed, they themselves are the greatest magical tool that they have.

And that magic has to come from within them. They're going to be the one. They're the key focal point for everything else. They have to start within them. And that was the biggest challenge that I see with contemporary, um, and I'm just going to say the consumer magic and contemporary thinking, but a lot of the entryway into magical practice and contemporary thinking "it's going to be quick." or "It's going to be easy and that's something out there." They can go to a fair. They can get a spell jar. They can get a little bauble. They can get a little something, something and that's going to do the thing for them. And that's not it.

ED: I like that. You said that we are the main tool. That's not often I hear that even out of modern pagans and even some of the modern elders because I asked an elder once I said, name me five tools of the craft and he named the cauldron, the candle, the bell, the book. You know, but he didn't mention himself. I told him, now look up all the tools of the craft because I don't want their genders, their correspondences, their uses, and everything else because you didn't name the most important tool, that's the self.

Rhonda: That's it. That's it. And that was a big, you know...It's sometimes difficult to really, really recognize that that is the thing. I'm not trying to criticize here, I'll overtly criticize, especially because of the consumerism factor of magic in 2020. In the 2020's that we're in right now, the consumerism factor is so high. And I'm not overly criticizing.

I love having the bobs (trinkets). I have a lot myself. Oh yes. All of us do. We all do. Right. But we understand at a certain point that it's not that (thing) that makes the magic. It can assist, it can help bring you to that, that focus, that space where you feel energized and you, and you know, what you're working on is truly focused. That's not what creates the magic. It's the work of that individual.

ED: Yes. That's something, like I said, I recognize that myself.

Every 15 years we go through a cycle though. Yes, it's like every 15 years we get a growth of practitioners, people wanting to find a craft or wanting to find what we do as a lifestyle.

This is something that I say we live in (it) and breathe. It's not just something we do.

Rhonda: Yes,

ED: People come into this, and they come into this with an expectation because they're told in the books. It's a year and a day and they'll go to each degree through the system and stuff like that. What do you normally tell a person who comes to you with that thing saying, it's a year and a day, in a year and a day, I can be a hire for you?

Rhonda: You know, that for me is, again, here we have a conversation, or an opportunity to communicate. It's an opportunity at that point to say... At that year and a day, now you are ready to begin your studies. You have just been introduced to something, you've committed to being introduced to it, and now you are ready to begin your studies.

That's what I would say about that person who says, "Ah, I've been in this for a year and a day and now I'm a so and so now." You're at a point where you're aware enough to say, and if you've been studying for that year and a day, and I mean studying curriculum, there's stuff that you've been trying to absorb to prepare yourself for that work.

ED: I always tell them that the year and a day is nothing more than the passing from seeker to initiate.

Rhonda: That's exactly right.

ED: After that point, it takes a day for the rest of your life, a study and learning to be a witch.

Rhonda: Precisely.

ED: To this day, and you've seen my website, you see, that's 38 years of research on that site. And it's still growing.

Rhonda: You'll never stop learning. It's not as though you can say, Ah, I've reached the pinnacle. I've arrived. No, you can get to points where you have epiphanies. I guess you could say you have these moments of awareness or a moment of understanding that lead you to that next rung up the ladder.

But you're still always climbing, still always in the process of becoming right.

ED: Exactly, because basically the vehicle we use, the mortal vehicle, is the vehicle for the soul to experience knowledge. I have the saying, I say, I'm a human doing, not a human being.

Rhonda: Hmm, that's a good way of putting that. I like that.

ED: Being's just a state of existence. Doing's a state of experiencing.

Rhonda: Yes. And I like the action element of doing. The fact that we are actively doing a thing. We're active, actioning something. And the "being" peace, I would say also on the other hand of that, allows for the stillness. It allows for the being still. There is all of that which needs to be incorporated.

ED: There is the witches pyramid that we know of, which is a teaching of the elements.

Rhonda: Yes. Which is huge for me. That's how I teach the cards. We start with the elements.

ED: Oh yes. Elements are most important because they teach each one has a specific teaching that they work with the Earth being "silence." The Air being "to know" because it carries all the senses, all five of them. The Fire being "to will," because of aggressive force.

Rhonda: Of course.

ED: The Water "being to dare" because water will go above beyond, around, though, or take shape of. The objective is the adaptability of water.

This is one of the things that I've seen is a misconception. You probably have too, is the threefold law. Even though it's a Wiccan thing. Primarily, there is a statement in there that says what you do comes back to you three times about three times good. I don't think people understand what that actually means because it's not a mathematical thing.

Rhonda: Right? And that becomes too literal. I don't see it as a literal thing either.

ED: The three, according to what I teach are the spiritual, physical, and emotional. Physical, emotional, and spiritual. Those are the three folds.

Rhonda: Okay.

ED: And it's a dharmatic principle. What we do affects us and others in those three aspects or folds.

Rhonda: Right. I see what you're saying.

ED: As we do it. The choice we make, so when Gerald and Doreen says what "ye send forth comes back to ye so ever mind the of the rule of three," that's what she meant.

Rhonda: Right. Right.

ED: That's what they were referring to. Those three aspects of our actions and consequences.

I'll have to show you the lesson I do later on for that. You'll enjoy that.

Rhonda: I'm happy to look at it. You know, the Assembly Sacred Wheel is a syncretic Wiccan tradition. That is one of the traditions I was a part of, and I still do study with the assembly.

Having said that, the threefold law is part of the Wiccan tradition overall. As you were saying, it's not the numerical (weight) of a thing or the mathematical weight of a thing. It's the way that that comes. There's a lot of conversation around that right now, but in any case, it's recognizing that we have responsibility. That responsibility is not just as simple as I do the act.

There are reactions to that act. It's not as simple or linear. Basically, what you were suggesting in your explanation, and I absolutely agree because we're not simply just physical beings. We have all the other layers and levels that we have to work within another.

ED: Another question I have for you. We have a few more minutes left. Okay. We have about 11 minutes.

Rhonda: Okay,

ED: One of the things I wondered about is your belief in the use of the Wheel of the Year. We have a seasonal wheel of the year in all the cycles of the earth.

Rhonda: Yes.

ED: And we're coming up on one of our major holidays, the Celtic New Year, the Samhain.

Rhonda: Mm hmm.

ED: Wonderful holiday. Yes. I think it's one of the witch's favorites.

Rhonda: Yes, indeed.

ED: What are some of the common misconceptions you've seen about Samhain, though? Other than the mispronunciation of the name.

Rhonda: Yes. What's the word I want to say? I'm going for a common or colloquial understanding. We have the kids that dress up in costume and the candy giving and all of that.

For me, Samhain, and I think for many who are in the craft and who practice it and who work within that framework of the Wheel of the Year, recognize Samhain as the third harvest. It's the one where whatever seed have fallen to the ground now are gifted to the earth. We are not to harvest and ingest at this point.

It's for our dead if you will. It's what's returned to the earth. And it's the acknowledgement of that entire cycle that we've been through of, you know, when we go through the Major holidays. We go through the holidays. You know, we're, we're recognizing that this is the time of endings. It's the time of endings in a transition.

So, we're acknowledging our sacred dead. We're acknowledging the returning to stillness. The energy of release, which is the letting go of. And that is really...I love this time of year. First of all, I wasn't born on 31st or Halloween, or Samhain which is really early November.

But I was born on the 28th, so I'm close to it. I'm close to that, that energy. Yes, the astrological sound I know is a little later in early November. But having said that, the energy of that time of the year, the end, the energy of endings, closings, transitioning, release.

The letting go. I appreciate that energy and I appreciate what it welcomes in after the period between Samhain and Yule. The return of the Sun at winter solstice. That period is the dark time. That's the period where we are at our most quiet because it is the period of, I don't want to say the nothing, but it's the darkest period.

It's the period where we are at our most dark. If you are equated to the lunar cycle, then it's the dark moon period, right? It's the period just before the new moon. That's the period between Samhain and New Year. When I think about or when I look at the misconceptions or what I find is the most commonly confused are about that period.

It's all we have that is just local tradition, but it's also, I think, missing the piece of recognizing that this is the acknowledgement where we honor our dead. We honor those who are with the others in that other land and that other space, the spiritual realm.

Also reminding ourselves that where that spirit resides or where spirit is right now, awaits all of us. And this is that time of the year where we have the height of our opportunity to be as quiet

and as still as possible to really connect. Where we get to understand that, while we're still here in the flesh. For a lot of people, it's a great opportunity for that kind of work.

ED: A lot of people believe death is the end of things if not it's a transition. It's the beginning of the new in the aspect of it removes the negative, removes the old teachings and the old beliefs and opens you up to new experiences and a new beginning.

The death card itself represents that in the Pharaoh. Because it shows death trampling over, over a child, which means a childish idea.

Rhonda: Absolutely.

ED: It shows death trampling over an adult, which represents some of the older thinking and actions that we take as adults that we've learned from childhood.

It tramples over a hierophant. Over some of the religious ideas in the town, it represents the removal of old ways of thinking into bringing in new life.

Yes, I'm familiar with that.

Rhonda: Yes, and we see that with the sun coming up in the, that sun coming up in the, between those two towers in the back of the death card. We can see that promise of that new day showing up, but we still have to get there. The inevitability, I look at the death card also as that.

Card of inevitability. It's the thing that recognizing nothing stops what's coming. It's change or transition, right? It's the notion, but it's that transformation. It is transformation. Yes, the inevitability of change and all of those things. But yes, and it will, it doesn't matter station in life.

It doesn't matter where you are. It doesn't matter who you are. All of those things, what's the word, they are not going to impede the movement of death. It's not going to impede the movement of what is inevitable.

ED: I always look at death as a new beginning, beginning of something new. One of my friends turned around and said to me, he goes, I wish this were the last of my lifetimes.

I said, I hope this is the first of many more.

Rhonda: Oh, thank you. Me too. So yes, I absolutely have enjoyed this conversation with you Edward. I really, I've appreciated the time. Thank you today.

ED: Yes, well, thank you for, thank you for being here with us today. And thank you for some of your insights and everything.

ED: Do you have any final words for our readers?

Rhonda: I just really appreciate the fact that you are here as a figure, sharing your wisdom, your experience, your service to the community.

You know, we are a disparate community, disparate, meaning we're just so spread out everywhere. It's key and critical to know that you're recording it, you're printing it, you're, you're sharing it for future generations. That for me is huge. So, thank you for that. Thank you for all of that work.

ED: Okay, well, I'm going to end the recording now. Everybody have a great and wonderful evening, and we'll look forward to our next interviews and our next upcoming issues.



Rhonda Alin is an Oracle, Charm and Tarot Card nerd as well as magickal practitioner, instructor, author and founder of Northern New Jersey Tarot (a group for card reading aficionados) and The Arcane Tarot Society (TATS). She purchased her first deck of divination cards at age 12, which was about the same time she began studying the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

She has studied with some of the most highly respected Cartomancers in the divination community and continues her studies by presenting at and attending annual national and international conferences, offering in-person classes and workshops as well as a beginner through advanced online Tarot course through The Magickal Path School (<https://www.themagickalpath.com>).

Rhonda is co-host of the YouTube show, Magickal Witchy World TV with Starr RavenHawk and 2025 will she her launching Conclave of the Mystics, a BIPOC Conference of Magicians.

She is a Scorpio sun and moon and believes that tarot, along with other forms of divination, are all living systems that are enhanced the more we work with them.



Ask A Witch Anything

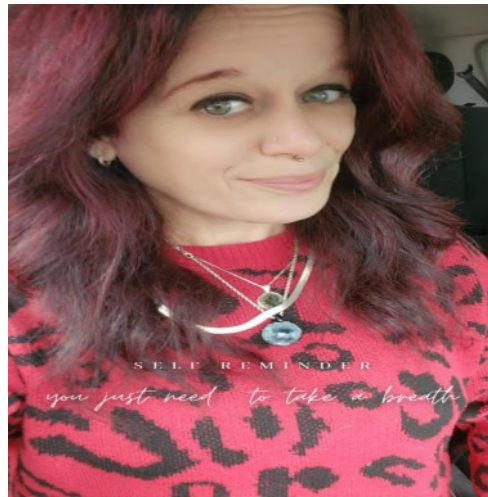
by Zannah

Hello out there, Zannah is the name. I'm an eclectic practitioner that studies a lot, so I thought instead of a dear Abby, why not "Ask A Witch Anything"? and I truly mean anything. I have an insatiable thirst for knowledge so if I don't already know, don't fret this witch has got you covered.

In the meantime did you know your personality type will help you become a stronger and wiser practitioner. Wanna know more email us and I will gladly cover this topic. Happy Ostara in the meantime and can't wait to be of service to you all. Happy Witching

Toodles,

Zannah



Zannah Matejak—Social Media Director: Hello my name is Zannah & I've been a practicing gray witch for 25 years. Initiated Norse shaman. I am a Yoni practitioner, I own a apothecary and metaphysical store. I am a wealth of knowledge of the occult and mythologies as well as a healer in a wide variety of modalities. I love to teach and building online communities on social media. Very passionate with what I do, I am an eclectic pagan who never gets enough knowledge.

If you have any question for Zannah, please feel free to email her at socialmedia@todayswitch.net put in your subject Ask A Witch Anything.. and you'll probably see your answer in the next issue.

We look forward to talking with our readers, so don't hesitate to reach out to us.



Abele

There are about 35 species of fast-growing, deciduous trees in this genus, which occurs throughout northern temperate regions. Poplars grow in a wide range of situations, tolerating wet soils, coastal conditions, and urban pollution; they make excellent screens, avenues, and windbreaks. The new leaves of some species are scented in spring, and many have ornamental variants. Poplars are closely related to willows (*Salix* species, see, White Willow) and similarly contain salicin, which reduces inflammation and relieves pain. Salicylates provided the basis for aspirin, which was synthesized in the 19th century. Many poplars are very similar in chemistry and are used interchangeably for medicinal purposes. Poplar bark comes mainly from *P. alba*, but *P. nigra* (Black Poplar), *P. tremuloides* (American Aspen), and other species are also used. *Populus alba* was listed in the U.S. Pharmacopoeia (1895-1936) as a remedy for fevers and menstrual pain. Poplar buds are collected mainly from *P. x. candicans*, but other sources include *P. balsamifera* (balsam poplar), and *P. nigra*. Poplar buds were listed in the U.S. Pharmacopoeia (1916-1965) as an expectorant and stimulant. The sticky bud resin is similarly to propolis, the resinous substance used by bees for sealing honeycombs and gaps in the hive, which has known antibiotic properties. *Populus x candicans* is often confused with other plants known as "balm of Gilead", such as *Abies bal-*

samea (See, Balsam Fir) and *Cedronella canariensis* (See, Canary Balm). *Populus* may be derived from the arbor populi, "the people's tree", since poplars have long been planted along town streets.



The many different species of poplar have such similar chemical properties that they are used interchangeably for medicinal purposes. Poplars contain salicin, the precursor of aspirin, and a resin comparable to propolis, a natural antibiotic. Poplars are, therefore, quite effective in reducing the pain and inflammation that accompany sore throats, fevers, headaches and arthritis.

Also known as the quaking aspen, this North American tree grows up to a hundred feet in height. An extract of its pale yellow bark was used traditionally to treat intermittent fevers and as a diuretic for urinary infections and gonorrhea. Native Americans made an ointment out of the bark, root, bud, and/or blossoms to treat wounds, burns and colds.

Common Name: Abele

Other Names: Black Poplar, European Aspen, Poplar, Poplar Bud, Quaking Aspen, White Poplar

Botanical Name: *Populus alba*, *Populus* spp.

Genus: *Populus*

Family: Salicaceae

Location: N. Africa, C. and W. Asia, Europe. U.S.A.

Height: 25m (80ft)

Width: 5-8m (15-25ft)

Variations: *Richardii* (smaller growing, with golden yellow leaves) Height: 15m (50ft) Width: 12m (40ft)

Hardiness: Z-8

Plant Facts: Poplars are members of the willow, or Salicaceae family and are also known as cottonwoods and aspens. The color of the bark, shape of the leaves and height of the deciduous trees vary from species. The male and female flowers grow on separate trees and are shaped like cattails, or catkins.

Parts Used: The bark is used fresh or dried for decoctions and tinctures. The buds, which are harvested in the spring, are used fresh or dried for salves and ointments. The leaves may also be used, but they have a less potent medicinal effect.

Components: All poplars contain the phenolic glycosides populin and salicylic acid, which has analgesic and anti-inflammatory effects. Tannins, volatile oil, oleoresins and flavonoids are also present.

Chemical Constituents: Chrysin, Gallic Acid, Humulene, Malic Acid, Mannite, Populin, Resin, Salicin, Tectochrysin.

Indications: Poplars reduce the pain and inflammation that are associated with sore throats, arthritis, colds, headaches, rheumatism,

fevers, and strained or aching muscles. Mildly diuretic, poplars help to ease the symptoms of cystitis and an enlarged prostate. In addition, the strong astringent and antibacterial action of poplars can relieve many skin conditions, including burns, cuts, wounds, abrasions, and hemorrhoids. As an expectorant, poplars help loosen and expel mucus to ease coughs, congestion and respiratory infections.

Warnings/Precautions: Not given to patients allergic to aspirin. People with allergic sensitivities to salicylates, which are commonly found in aspirin and bee stings, should not use any species of poplar unless under the close supervision of a health-care professional.

Don't take if: Pregnant, have gastrointestinal disorders, or with any medicinal drugs containing aspirin.

Typical Dose: A typical daily dose is approximately 10 gm of poplar leaves, while an external dose is approximately 5 gram of buds, applied to the skin.

Bibliography: Encyclopedia of Herbs by Deni Brown Copyright ©: 1995, 2001 Dorling Kindersley Limited pp.327-328
The Complete Guide to Natural Healing Copyright © 1999 International Masters Publishers AB™ Group 1 Card 76
The Essential Herb-Drug-Vitamin Interaction Guide by Geo. T. Grossberg, MD and Barry Fox, PhD Copyright©2007 Barry Fox, PhD. Pg.374
Vitamins, Herbs, Minerals & Supplements The Complete Guide by H. Winter Griffith, MD Copyright©1998 Fisher Books Pp.419-420

NOTE: See prcupcc.org/herbs/herbsa/abele.htm for more info.

Achroite

Achroite crystallizes in the form of vertically striated prismatic crystals, sometimes slender and sometimes needle-like.



Physical Properties:

Other Name(s):	Colorless Tourmaline
Category:	Cyclosilicate
Color(s):	Colorless
Crystal Structure/System:	Trigonal
Chemical Composition/Formula:	$(\text{Ca}, \text{K}, \text{Na})(\text{Al}, \text{Fe}, \text{Li}, \text{Mg}, \text{Mn})_3(\text{Al}, \text{Cr}, \text{Fe}, \text{V})_6(\text{BO}_3)_3(\text{Si}, \text{Al}, \text{B})_6\text{O}_{18}(\text{OH}, \text{F})_4$
Geological Category:	Metamorphic
Strunz Classification:	9.CK.05
Specific Gravity:	2.9-3.2
Crystal Habit:	Prismatic; striated
Hardness/Mohs Scale:	7-7.5
Cleavage:	Poor/Indistinct
Fracture:	Subconchoidal
Luster:	Vitreous
Streak:	White
Diaphaneity:	Transparent
Occurrence:	Sri Lanka, Brazil, Africa, USA, Australia, Afghanistan, Italy, Germany, Madagascar, Tanzania

Physiological Healing Properties

Treatments:

12—Strand DNA, Spinal Adjustments

Preparation:

Elixir

.

Metaphysical Properties

Astrology:	Aquarius ♒
Numerology:	6 and 7
Element:	Air
Chakra:	Crown
Planet:	The Moon
Tarot:	The Lovers, The Devil, The Chariot, The Tower, 6 of Wands, 7 of Wands
Tone:	A, F
God:	Anubis, Apollo, Coeus, Coyote, Credne, Elegba, Gobniu, Hephaestus, Hermes, Lugh, Mercury, Nabu, Ogmia, Orpheus, Thoth, Woden
Goddesses:	Athena, Brigit, Calliope, Clio, Cerridwen, Erato, Euterpe, Ma'at, Melpomene, Metis, Minerva, Mnemosyne, Polyhymnia, Pombagira, Terpsichore, Thalia, Urania.
Emotional Healing:	Aligning the meridians of the physical and etheric bodies, this stone clears and protects the aura. Thus healing deep soul rooted damage, and activating the karma of grace
Spiritual Healing:	This stone assists in contact with high spiritual beings and facilitates channeling and automatic writing.
Affirmation:	I am in tune with my higher self and accept the gifts it bestows upon me.
Bibliography:	Love is in the Earth by Melody Copyright©2004 Earth-Love Publishing House. pp.653-656 The Encyclopedia of Crystals by Judy Hall Copyright©2013 Octopus Publishing Group, Ltd. pg.248

Ostara: Deities who are celebrated

By Emily Thornton

Ostara, also known as the Spring Equinox, holds a significant place in the Pagan calendar, marking the arrival of spring and the reawakening of nature. This festival is a time of joy, renewal, and reverence for the deities who embody the essence of spring's fertility and the earth's revitalization.

Eostre: The Dawn Goddess

The most prominent deity linked to Ostara is Eostre, a Germanic goddess of spring and fertility. Her name is believed to have inspired the term "Easter." Eostre is often portrayed as a youthful, radiant woman adorned with flowing hair and a gentle smile. She is frequently depicted carrying a basket overflowing with eggs or flowers, symbolizing the fertility and fresh beginnings that spring brings. As the goddess of the dawn, Eostre represents the triumph of light over darkness and the renewal of life after the winter's slumber.

Ostara: The Embodiment of Spring

Ostara, another Germanic goddess associated with the Spring Equinox, derives her name from the Old English word "eastre," meaning "east," the direction from which the sun rises. She is often portrayed as a strong, independent woman, symbolizing the sun's power and the earth's fertility. Ostara is often depicted riding a horse or surrounded by animals, highlighting her deep connection to the natural world. She represents the awakening of nature, the blossoming of flowers, and the abundance of new life.

Freya: The Goddess of Love and Fertility

Freya, a Norse goddess of love, beauty, and fertility, is closely associated with Ostara due to her role as the goddess of the Vanir, a group of deities linked to fertility and abundance. Freya is often portrayed as a stunning woman with long, flowing hair and a golden necklace. She is frequently depicted riding a chariot pulled by two cats, symbolizing her connection to the animal kingdom and her dominion over love and desire. Her association with spring lies in her ability to inspire passion, growth, and new beginnings.

Persephone: The Queen of the Underworld and Spring

Persephone, the Greek goddess of spring and the underworld, plays a dual role in the cycle of life and death. Her return from the underworld each spring symbolizes the renewal of nature and the triumph of life over death. Persephone is often depicted as a young woman holding a sheaf of wheat or a pomegranate, representing the harvest and the cycle of rebirth. Her story serves as a reminder that even in the darkest of times, hope and renewal are always possible.

Ishtar: The Mesopotamian Goddess of Love and War

Ishtar, the Mesopotamian goddess of love, fertility, and war, embodies the duality of nature. She represents both the creative and destructive forces of the universe. Ishtar is often depicted as a powerful woman armed with a bow and arrow, symbolizing her warrior spirit. However, she is also associated with love, sexuality, and fertility. Her connection to spring lies in her ability to bring forth new life and inspire passion and growth.

Aphrodite: The Greek Goddess of Love and Beauty

Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, beauty, and desire, embodies the sensual and passionate aspects of spring. She is often depicted as a stunning woman emerging from the seafoam, symbolizing her birth from the ocean. Aphrodite is associated with flowers, birds, and other symbols of love and beauty. Her connection to spring lies in her ability to inspire love, passion, and creativity.

Belenus: The Celtic God of the Sun and Light

Belenus, the Celtic god of the sun and light, represents the life-giving power of the sun and the warmth that spring brings. He is often depicted as a young man with radiant hair and a fiery chariot. Belenus is associated with healing, prosperity, and the power of the sun to nourish and sustain life. His connection to spring lies in his ability to bring light and warmth to the world after the darkness of winter.

Brigid: The Celtic Goddess of Fertility, Healing, and Smithcraft

Brigid, the Celtic goddess of fertility, healing, and smithcraft, represents the creative and transformative power of spring. She is often depicted as a young woman with fiery hair and a forge. Brigid is associated with poetry, music, and the arts. Her connection to spring lies in her ability to inspire creativity, passion, and new beginnings.

Below are some ideas to help celebrate Ostara this year

- **Spring Cleaning:** Many people engage in spring cleaning during Ostara to symbolically cleanse their homes and prepare for the new season.
- **Decorations:** Homes and altars are often adorned with flowers, eggs, and other symbols of spring.
- **Egg Painting:** Egg painting is a popular Ostara tradition, often associated with fertility and new beginnings.
- **Ostara Altar:** Creating an Ostara altar is a common way to honor the deities and celebrate the season.
- **Rituals and Ceremonies:** Ostara rituals and ceremonies often involve honoring the deities, celebrating the return of spring, and planting seeds for future growth.
- **Feasting:** Ostara is often celebrated with a feast featuring spring foods such as fresh vegetables, fruits, and eggs.
- **Nature Walks:** Many people take nature walks during Ostara to connect with the awakening earth and appreciate the beauty of spring.
- **Meditation and Reflection:** Ostara is an excellent time for meditation and reflection on personal growth, renewal, and new beginnings.
- **Planting Seeds:** Planting seeds in your garden or potted plants is a symbolic way to celebrate Ostara and welcome the new season.
- **Offerings:** Offerings are often made to the deities and spirits associated with Ostara, such as flowers, food, or candles.

Ostara: We Honor Thee

In Ostara's embrace, nature awakes,
A symphony of life, the earth shakes.
Pagan rituals, ancient and profound,
Celebrate the turning of the ground.
Goddesses dance, their veils of green,
Blessings bestowed, a sacred scene.
Eostre's dawn brings hope anew,
Ostara's bounty, forever true.
Altars adorned with eggs and flowers,
Symbols of fertility, powers.
Incense rises, prayers ascend,
Ostara's magic, without end.
Gather 'round the bonfire's light,
Chants and spells, invoking might.
Hands raised high, hearts filled with cheer,
Ostara's blessings, ever near.
With gratitude, we honor this day,
Ostara's gifts, we gladly convey.
In harmony with nature's embrace,
Pagan rituals, a timeless grace.

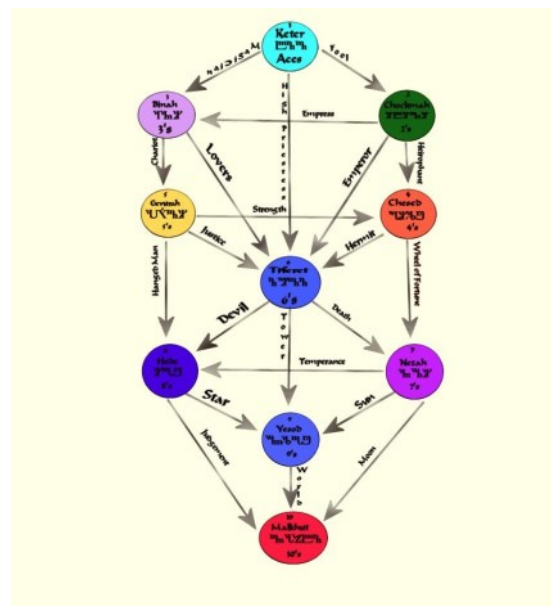


Tree of Life

Sacred Paths of the Qabala

Path 14

Titles:	The Wife
Intelligence:	Illuminating Intelligence
Place:	Path joins Chockmah to Binah
Hebrew Name:	Daleth; ד (Door)
Number:	4
Angel:	Haniel חניאל
Qlippoth (Demons):	A'arab Zaraq; צראכ זראק (The Dispersers)
Demons of Hidden Path:	Dagdagiël דגדגיאל
God Forms:	Freya, Hathor, Aphrodite, Venus
Color Atziluth:	Emerald Green
Color Briah:	Sky Blue
Color Assiah:	Bright Rose sprayed with Pale Green
Incense:	Sandalwood
Animals:	Sparrow, Dove, Swan, Lynx, Leopard
Legendary Beings:	Succubi
Stones:	Emerald, Turquoise
Plants:	Rose, Clover, Cowslip, Myrtle
Tree:	Pine
Zodiac/Element:	Venus
Tarot Card:	The Empress (Daughter of the Mighty One)
Human Body:	Genital System
Diseases:	Sex Diseases (VD)
Magickal Powers:	Love philters and love magick



The Dhammapada of Buddha

Chapter XV

Happiness

Verse CXC VII

We live happily indeed, not hating those who hate us! Among men who hate us we dwell free from hatred!

Verse CXC VIII

We live happily indeed, free from ailments among the ailing! Among men who are ailing let us dwell free from ailments!

Verse CXC IX

We live happily indeed, free from greed among the greedy! Among men who are greedy let us dwell free from greed!

Verse CC

We live happily indeed, though we call nothing our own! We shall be like the bright gods, feeding on happiness!

Verse CCI

Victory breeds hatred, for the conquered is unhappy. He who has given up both victory and defeat, he, the contented, is happy.

Verse CCII

There is not fire like passion; there is no losing throw like hatred; there is not pain like this body; there is no happiness higher than the rest

Verse CCIII

Hunger is the worst of diseases, the elements of the body the greatest evil; if one knows this truly, that is Nirvana, the highest happiness.

Verse CCIV

Health is the greatest of gifts, contentedness the best riches; trust is the best of relationships, Nirvana the highest happiness.

Verse CCV

He who has tasted the sweetness of solitude and tranquility, is free from fear and free from sin, while he tastes the sweetness of drinking in the law.

Verse CCVI

The sight of the elect (Ariya) is good, to live with them is always happiness; if a man does not see fools, he will be truly happy.

Verse CCVII

He who walks in the company of fools suffers a long way; company with fools, as with an enemy, is always painful; company with the wise is pleasure, like meeting with kinsfolk.

Verse CCVIII

Therefore, one ought to follow the wise, the intelligent, the learned, the much enduring, the dutiful, the elect; one ought to follow such a good and wise man, as the moon follows the path of the stars.





The Fool Discovers The Devil or Shadow

By Emily Thornton

The Fool discovered the importance of balance during his time with the Temperance being. As he continues on his journey, he has come to the most difficult part of his journey. The next two cards are considered the most upsetting in the

tarot. However, with proper understanding, one discovers that they are a necessity to grow.

The Fool has now discovered the Devil or Shadow card in the tarot. This card is the 15th in the Major Arcana. Though the card is often associated with darkness, temptation, and the shadow side of human nature; this card can also represent profound transformation and the potential for liberation.

When one hears the term Devil, one usually thinks of a horned figure or dark figure. The Devil card typically depicts a horned figure seated on a throne, with a man and a woman chained at his feet. The figure often has goat-like or demonic features, such as horns, a tail, and cloven hooves. He may also be holding a pitchfork or other symbols of power and control.

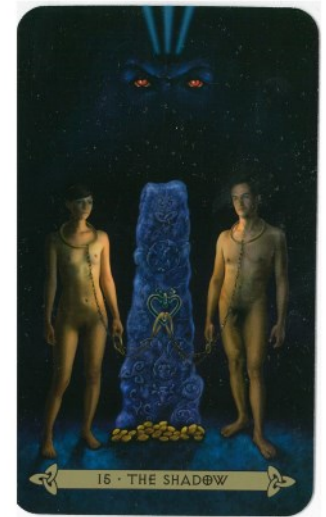
There is a real duality here within the Devil card. The Fool sees the remnants of instant gratification, the fun, the party and the addiction. When he wakes up, the truth becomes clearer and has gotten himself manipulated into being chained. One of the aspects of this card is having the strength and working on one's own empowerment to leave the current situation.

This can represent someone who may be feeling trapped, maybe in a relationship, work, held to something, addicted, maybe even someone who is stuck in a violent place/relationship. There is a real limiting energy to this card, which can translate that the querent is having issues seeing a way out. What are they focusing on? This can also signify that the querent needs to work on their shadow self. One cannot understand light and happiness without understanding the darker aspects of our nature.

The black in the background symbolizes the formality...and that dominance is a zero tolerance. The Devil is seen with almost vampiric wings, it symbolizes that this issue is sucking the life out of them. There are the chains that are keeping one bound and bonded in that negative space. The cube the Devil is sitting on represents the harsh perspective...there is only one point of view there, his. The man and woman are starting to grow horns like the devil. His negative energy is leaching into them and they are becoming more dark and resentful. The tail of the man rep-

resents that animalistic and instant gratification. The woman has a tail of grapes, again that instant gratification.

In the Celtic Tarot by Kristoffer Hughes (to the right). The Devil card has been renamed The Shadow. This card is a bit different than the Rider Waite. There is no Devil figure but there is a demonic pair of red eyes staring out from the shadows. The use of shadows gives one a feeling like it is angry or studying. One sees the pile of coins at the bottom of a stone tower. This also signifies pleasure and instant gratification. Looking at the figures, one sees that they are both loosely chained. They have the ability to throw off their chains, but the addiction or temptation is so strong at the moment. Looking above the demonic eyes one sees the Awen. The Awen again is inspiration or symbolism of the three divisions of the soul. The three lines or Awen, are giving a hope to the figures. They need that spiritual side of themselves or changing of their aspect...to leave the current predicament. This is where it would be important to impress upon the querent that they need the help of a therapist or trusted friend to improve what is going on in their life.



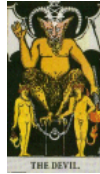
The Devil card can have a range of meanings, depending on the context of the reading. In general, it represents the shadow side of human nature, including our fears, desires, and addictions. It can also indicate a time of temptation or testing, where we are confronted with choices that could lead us down a destructive path.



Tarot Spread

Pisces

"I Know"



Card #	Question	Divinatory Meaning:
1.	My Idealism	The Eight of Swords indicates that the person is not very idealistic, and tends toward being cynical instead.
2.	My willingness to sacrifice	The Devil in this spread indicates that the person is too giving and will often give to their detriment with the expectation of reward.
3.	My spiritual experience	The Hierophant indicates that the person is extremely spiritual and is too convicted to their faith that they aren't grounded in reality.
4.	My addiction to...	The Nine of Cups in this spread indicates that the person is co-dependent and addicted to being loved by other people.
5.	My current secret enemies	The Ace of Swords indicates that they are prone to being victimized by people with narcissistic tendencies.
6.	My prison, Where am I bound/Stuck?	The Seven of Pentacles indicates that they feel it necessary to give of all their possessions to be recognized by others.
7.	What will deliver me of my burdens?	Temperance indicates that they need to focus on balancing themselves and allow themselves a bit of healthy selfishness.

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Books by Pagan and Other Authors

Vikingstock

by Roderick Edwards



The Real Vikings of History, not TV and comics books -- Vikingstock

By Roderick Edwards

The Norse people were about more than runes and raids, they were practical traders and farmers.

Roderick Edwards, with confirmed Viking heritage traced unbroken back to 680 AD in Norway and author of over 35 multi-genre books tackles the history and heritage of the Norse, Proto-Germanic people known as the Vikings. His latest book VIKINGSTOCK is released in all 4 formats; ebook, paperback, hardcover, and audiobook.

Taking a direct approach, based on his years as a data analyst, Roderick Edwards cuts through all the myth and misinformation and presents the Vikings as real people rather than comic book heroes, beard-braided savages or shieldmaidens in leather bikinis. There are plenty of outlets for a reader to fall into the fantasy of the folklore but less are the opportunities to connect with the heritage of the real people. Vikings live on today, not just in the Scandinavians, Icelandic, and even Kievan Russians, but in many cultures touched by the Vikings including the Europeans and ideologically, in the Americans.

Key Highlights of Vikingstock

Introduction to Skalds, Eddas, and Sagas

Is Viking a verb or a noun?

Revival or Revision: The Neopagan Vikings

Is Valhalla the Viking Heaven?

“Vikingstock is a reconnection, not only to my own heritage that had been hidden from me by my adoption, but now recovered by my reunion with my birth-family, but Vikingstock attempts to remove the commercialization, the Christianization, and the ‘paganization’ of a people who would not recognize themselves in the present depiction of their ‘stock’, their ancestry and history”, says author Roderick Edwards.

Renowned pagan scholar, Edward Sott says: “Having had the privilege of reading this manuscript before it was published I can honestly say that this book is very impressive. Roderick Edwards really applied himself to the research necessary to produce a very factual account of the Norse people. I would definitely recommend this book to all readers of all ages who are interested in Vikings and in understanding the truth behind their culture and their history.” – Amazon Review of Vikingstock

Special Release Offer: For a limited time, by request and while supplies last, you can get the audiobook version of Vikingstock, FREE by writing rodericke.com/contact US and UK only.

About the Author: Roderick Edwards is the prolific author of over 35 multi-genre books ranging from biographies of WW1 and WW2 heroes, to his own autobiography, and a variety of other topics like politics, religion, race-relations, and yes fiction including time-travel and murder mysteries. But all of these works are inspired and influenced by Roderick’s life as an adoptee and a semi-serious prepper living in the middle of the 450,000 acre Ocala Forest in Central Florida, raising chickens and ducks and growing exotic plants like cacao, banana, olive and Pakistani mulberry trees.

Availability: Vikingstock is available now as paperback, ebook, hardcover, and soon in audiobook formats from Amazon and Audible.

Media Contact: RoderickEdwardsr@rodericke.com or rodericke.com/contactrodericke.com

Interview With Roderick Edwards Author of Vikingstock

ED: Good afternoon, everybody. Welcome to Today's Witch Magazine's interview with Roderick Edwards, author of "Viking Stock." How many other books, Roderick?

Roderick: Maybe 35. I'm not certain. I've lost count.

ED: Roughly around 30, 35 other books. I had the privilege of being able to read "Viking Stock" before it actually got released, and found it to be a very fascinating and historical approach to looking at the actual truth behind the Norse and Normans as opposed to the fictional vikings that you see on tv on a regular basis. I'm privileged to have the author of the book here with me Roderick Edwards.

Thank you for being here Roderick.

Roderick: My pleasure. I appreciate it very much

ED: Okay, what was the first thing that actually inspired you to write on the Vikings?

Roderick: As you know, but now some of the listeners and readers will know, I was adopted. At age 50, I found my birth family and was able to trace my lineage unbroken, all the way back to 680 AD in Norway.

Now, I have had a lot of people challenge that and until I showed them my actual genealogy. Because they said, "Nobody's been able to trace themselves back to actual Vikings." Well, I have. I'm not trying to be arrogant, but I did do it. I was actually surprised that I was able to do it, but yes, I did.

That kind of inspired me. I want to know more about my own heritage. As you said at the opening, free from all the commercialization of it.

ED: Well, let's discuss a little bit about what's in your book, because I found the information very fascinating and very factual. You covered various different things. First of all, that Viking is not a race, but an occupation.

Roderick: Right. Right. A lot of people say, well, Viking is obviously a verb. It's an action. It's not only a verb. It is a noun. Just like A person who goes sailing is called a sailor. It is an occupation, as you say. It is a description of a type of people.

They're Vikings. There were Norse people who went vikinging. They went out to plunder and to explore. It's the same concept. Not every Norse person, not every person from Norway, not every person from Iceland, Greenland, wherever you want to name, Scandinavia, went out vikinging. They were Scandinavian, but they weren't technically Vikings unless they participated in that activity.

ED: Now, another concept that we see in Neo-paganism today, people assume that with Odinism, Asatru, and all the others... (You touch on this in your book and I appreciate the way you handled it in the book. Very factual.) There are so many misconceptions regarding it, and confusions regarding Odinism, Asatru, and the history of the...I am going to call them Norsemen.

Roderick: Yes.

ED: Yeah. Or Norman. Because actually in Europe it was Norman and Saxon, and that was a differentiation between the Kelts and the

Norman.

Roderick: Right. And they start calling themselves that, more like in 1066 AD when, when the conqueror came in, he was called Norman or Normandy.

ED: Right. And prior to that there were the Norman, the Norse Norman. Right. Because that's what Norseman actually means right,

Roderick: Right, because they came from the North

ED: The Saxons who came into China and into European regions, right? They were at constant warfare if I'm not mistaken.

Roderick: Yes, I mean it obviously there are histories that get you when you go back a little further. Until, obviously, the raid on Lindisfarne.

We didn't hear much about what the Norse or the Normans were doing, or the Vikings were doing before then. They were a mystery even to the Europeans at that time. What, what, who are these people? When they first came down, the Europeans didn't really know who they were.

ED: Another thing you touched on was the mistake that people say about Druidism. Vikings and Druids have nothing to do with each other, correct?

Roderick: Well, the languages, the way they write their, their runes seem to overlap. I think that's just a coincidence to some degree because a lot of the original languages started out with being just dashes, dashes, and dot.; No matter wherever you look, basically all over the world.

ED: In your book, you also touch on the word pagan itself. In touching on the word pagan, it has several connotations. It wasn't until the Christianization of Europe that it became considered anything non-Christian. Prior to that it meant earth dweller or agrarian. It was a term given by the Roman Etruscan, actually akin to basically hillbilly.

Roderick: Right. It was a simpleton folk. Later on, as you said, the Christians (the dates are, you know, debatable) Christians started calling non-Christians, even ones that were citified or civilized, they started also calling them pagans. It didn't just contain the concept of hill folk, farmer folk, or agrarian.

Eventually, anybody who was non-Christian became a pagan. I just find it odd that it's almost like the Protestants, who love to call themselves Protestants, are actually a pejorative. Which means protestors of the church. When pagans proudly say "I'm a Pagan" and they're really taking on this pejorative. Which is fine, but they just need to realize that they're taking on a pejorative of who they are.

ED: That's one of the things there are issues within the pagan community itself, and that's linguistics. Taking modern terminology, and if you seek its roots, you find that half the things that we, that pagans call themselves are derogatory statements. The derogatory origin, such as pagan or warlock is another example, right?

Roderick: Right.

ED: All of these were words of insult.

Roderick: Right. I think what's worse, though, is within the so-called pagan communities. It is like what the Greeks did. They conflate a lot of different myths or ideologies into a giant catch-all bucket, which doesn't make any sense. The Greeks did that because the Greeks were trying to basically claim all these different pantheons.

Pagans harken back to their own pantheon. I think when pagans do that, to some degree they are watering down what they are. What you should do as a so-called pagan is define which mythology, if you want to call it that, best represents your beliefs and stick with it, whether it's Egyptian or Indian or the Hindu.

But a lot of times you just conflate a lot of those together and just mix them up in a giant pagan stew that makes no sense to most people.

ED: You make a very good point there. First of all take Egypt for example.. It also happened before Greece. It happened in Egypt initially, the idea of putting a temple in the middle of nowhere, where anybody from any religion could go worship and leave tithes for their own gods. That is how that developed, and it actually the Phoenicians are the ones who actually started that process in play with simple stone, offerings, stone edifices and stuff like that.

And you see it in Judaic culture known as the Shekinah, which is a female representation of God,

Roderick: Right? The Shekinah glory. It's often equated to the Holy Spirit. I know we're getting on a different path here. What I see though a lot is those Norsemen back in the Viking times in the 800s, 900s, all the way through the thousands... If you would have told them anything about some of the Egyptian gods, they didn't have any idea about those.

I think what happens, in our 21st century mind, since we have access to a lot more things than they did, we see similarities between them. We make connections that aren't necessarily even there. Like we did with the Druids and the runes from the Vikings. They may or may not be there. That's the reason why some people aren't likely to equate the Druids and the Vikings together, which, as you said, I don't think they are really.

ED: Like most conquering, basically and pillaging and ravaging people, okay? You had the Babylonians, you had the Phoenicians, you had the Egyptians, you had the Greeks, you had the Romans, and you had the Vikings.

Now, they also establish trade routes wherever they are, once they take over. In the region, they establish a trade route, they establish markets, they establish cultures. And of course, when you take over a culture from another thing, you're going to adapt or adopt various different aspects of that culture in order to maintain a healthy, societal dealing with them.

Right. The better the economy, the better economic trade and stuff. The Vikings not only were conquerors, but they were traders.

Roderick: Explorers and traders and opportunists. That's as you mentioned here. That's where we don't think about this and I mentioned this in the book Russians really are Vikings.

They're Vikings. They're Swedish Vikings that came all the way down there and were developing a trade route and decided to stay there. They kind of mixed with the Slavs there and that's the reason why

you have that going on. The same thing we look at are the Vikings from Norway and Sweden. They came down and intermingled with the English and the French and, and now their influence on those cultures is undeniable.

ED: Now, you, you can note with your, with your cover title, for example the logo on your cover?

Roderick: Yes.

ED: You notice how you have the knotwork and everything? That was very, that's very similar and comparable to that of the Celtic peoples.

Roderick: Right.

ED: That's because, now when you mentioned in your book regarding Ogham, the Ogham Bethlehem and, uh, the Rune being similar and both having routes from the Cuneiform.

Roderick: Right.

ED: You were, you were accurate. The knotwork that you see in both actually comes from Pictish.

Roderick: Right, the original further back source.

And we don't know how much interaction that the Vikings or the Norse had with those cultures before Lindenstrom. So they had other ones. Well, that's the one we are infamously citing all the time. The idea is when exactly the Vikings came to Europe, what most historians believe... but they could have come to Europe long before that.

ED: Yeah. That is like people misunderstand anything Viking. Vikings were the first to actually take a and come to America.

Roderick: Right? I mentioned that in the book as well.

ED: Leif Erikson and his band. And it was, and that was actually the discovery of his (colonies) in Greenland and Iceland, as well as in America itself.

Right. Right. His colonies there actually predate even his first voyage. They were his fourth voyage to our country before he settled.

Roderick: Right. Because of his brothers. He had a village or a settlement there in Newfoundland. I guess, is somewhere around that area. What happened is his brothers wanted to use his actual settlement to settle.

And so they went there as well later on. After he stayed back in Greenland or Iceland, wherever he wanted to stay. Obviously those are different places. And they went ahead and continued on and lots of stuff happened. They got killed as well by the natives there.

ED: Yeah. So, like I said, there's a lot of misconceptions surrounding the Vikings and I appreciate that you brought them to light in your book.

You know, that's something that really, I look forward to putting in the publication, of course, you know, and into our publication, we are going to definitely be featuring your book in this March issue.

Roderick: Good.

Roderick: Well, thank you very much. If anybody's going to get this book, they should realize this is not a comprehensive book about everything Viking. It's touching on the heritage of the Norse people.

I don't get much into all the mythologies and all the different gods. I do mention them to some degree, but that's up for your choice. Somebody who has that interest will continue to pursue it in other places. I do mention places they can pursue it, but I don't pursue it much in the book. It's just basically about the practical people named the Norse and the Vikings

ED: Yeah, well, I know you wrote one prior to this on Vikings.

Roderick: That was more of a fictional account. It does have some mention of there, but it does a fictional account based on some historical fact. But it's more of a fictional part of a three part time travel series I had.

ED: Oh, okay, that's part of the time travel series? Right. Okay, I didn't know "American Viking" was part of time travel.

Roderick: It's not like this one at all. I mean, you're going to have to like time travel before you like that one.

ED: You know, you and I share a common bond in that and time travel works. Well, like I said, you know, I look forward to getting the copy, of course. I definitely look forward to it.

I really enjoyed the read, like I said, it was a very fascinating read. You were very historically accurate. I couldn't say that you didn't do your homework because you definitely did your homework with that.

Roderick: I appreciate that, especially coming from somebody who has delved in and has written about and understands a lot of the interaction with the various Pantheons.

You could have really critiqued me on that. There's a lot of interaction between you and I about some things here and some of it I used and some of it I didn't. In the conclusion of the book as we continue on. Like you said, you got it before I actually published it and I appreciate your input and your additions to it.

ED: Oh, if you're interested in writing again for the magazine, by the way, I'll see you on the next one.

Roderick: There we go. Yeah.

ED: Okay. If you're willing to write a future article on, for March. Feel free to add to what we're already doing. We're discussing cultures in March's issue. If you want to touch more on the Viking culture and heritage in an article, we'd be happy to publish it.

Roderick: All right. I might, might definitely consider that.

ED: You know, I'd be happy to publish it. I'm currently writing two articles right now. One is on the, one was on the origin and creation stories. The nine types of creation stories, what they are, and describing, explaining them. And the other is anthropological and theosophical origins of animism to religion.

Roderick: Very good. Well, you'll notice, and I don't want to give too much away because, but it's not really like a book that you try to read to see what the end is or anything like that. There is something in the book that people might find interesting. We always think about Viking's heaven as being Valhalla.

Valhalla was a temporary place until Ragnarok happened. Which was basically the end time battle when the Gods didn't necessarily die, but they kind of went away. What the Vikings did was...in Gamal which is where the Vikings actually would end up if you survived Ragnarok, that's where you ended up.

And the real heaven. So, and that even I didn't know that until I did some more studies. I always thought it was Valhalla or the field...it wasn't either one of those places. Those are temporary.

ED: Actually, there are seven worlds to the Viking Mythology.

Roderick: Well, I know there's more. I mentioned that in there, but the confirmed ones actually validate that didn't come from Snorri or anything like that, are those. That's the one I just mentioned. Right. The rest of them are kind of debatable.

ED: Very true. George Dawson did write his in the middle of the 10th and 11th century, so therefore it's, of course, somewhat Christianized versions. Right. Take the prose edit versus the poetic edit. That's the thing you have to consider.

Roderick: Right. And also we have to separate the fact that, uh, come on, it's coming to me. Why can't I get this? Oh, by the world tree, Yggdrasil. The world tree has nine realms. That's not the same as the heavens.

Now the various heavens are various parts of Viking mythology. Where they reside in those places, like Asgard. But those aren't the actual places. Those are just the overarching places. For example, Valhalla is in Asgard, but Asgard is not necessarily heaven. It's just the realm of the gods,

ED: Right? It's the realm of the gods. It's typical of most of your Ascendant stories if you will. Or emergent stories that there will be multiple realms of existence and within those multiple realms, starting from an underworld, they move the underworld becomes overpopulated and they move up towards the outer world or the earth realm, right?

That's a common theme to most emergence stories. And in those aspects, there is that aspect of emergence in the Viking mythos, but there's also other aspects in the Viking mythos, such as the divine twin. Aspects of creation story. And that's, and also consummation. One of the misunderstood parts of the Viking story, by the way, everybody assumes that Odin, Vile, and Ve, right?

Roderick: Right, the three brothers.

ED: Had created the actual first humans. No. No, they created the first gods. Because the ones who created the first human were actually Thor and Sifr. Right with Ask and Embla.

Roderick: Right. So, this kind of stuff, which is fine, I do touch on this, but I don't get this deep in the book. So, people need to realize, if you're looking for that kind of stuff and say "this Roderick guy, he doesn't know what he's talking about." I understand that stuff, but I didn't want to get that deep in this book.

Maybe some future book.

ED: No, I, uh, you did a very accurate and very concise book on the Viking mentality.

Roderick: Mentality of Vikings. They're, they're practical people. They're charismatic people. And, yes they were also very spiritual and religious people, very passionate, but they were also very practical people. I want to go get loot. You know, I want a better place for my family to raise crops and have cattle and things like that. They were very practical as well.

ED: And they were one of the strongest cultures and longest living cultures that existed.

Roderick: Right. And we mentioned, I think I mentioned in the book where the Vikings are one of the first cultures besides China that invented the magnetic compass.

Which has allowed them to really navigate in ways that Europeans were far behind because they didn't have that. They had all kinds of different inventions. The keel, this little square part of the bottom of the ship that allows it to stay balanced, so it doesn't capsize as much. They had these, and this keel allowed them to sail long distances without getting pushed over in the heavy waves of the ocean.

ED: They were quite ingenious, not only in their creation of weapons of warfare and travel, and long durational voyages, you're absolutely right there.

They were amazing for that. They were, they're the ones who actually circumnavigated the globe before the globe was! You know, figuring out how to circumnavigate the globe before...

Roderick: Yeah, when the earth was still flat.

ED: I'm joking.

Roderick: I'm joking.

ED: I know you're joking. When the earth was still flat, they're the ones who circumnavigated the globe.

They did it before Columbus was trying to figure out his new way around, that's for sure.

Roderick: Yeah, well they definitely got further along than he did.

ED: And they were a lot further along in industry. They were a lot further along in trade. They were a lot further along in understanding their history and legacies.

Roderick: And I think part of that comes from their separation and their isolation from most of Europe. They had to. They couldn't rely, at least until later on, they couldn't rely upon learning their concepts from other cultures and civilizations. They had to develop them themselves, independently.

I think the difference, just to make a contrast here, a lot of the African cultures. We had a lot of African cultures that did not develop things like big sailing ships and things like that. They didn't really do a lot of things that the Europeans and some other cultures did, even the Chinese or, or the Japanese.

And I think the reason, it's just a speculation, is the Africans, they lived in a paradise. Back then, Africa was a very big paradise. You could grow anything, even now you could grow anything you wanted to. Uh, so they didn't have a reason to leave their place. The Vikings lived in a very cold climate that they had to go searching for better land, better opportunities, and better everything, so it caused

them to become explorers.

ED: Right. In addition to that, there were occasional scalds or battles between the two, between their clans. Right. And, you know one clan seeking superiority over the other. That was occasional. But when it came down to it, under certain rulers and leaderships, They managed to maintain discipline and order within their own culture.

Roderick: Right. I mentioned this in the book as well. Compared to a lot of the Europeans, the Vikings did have leaders or people who ascended to power. However, it wasn't like the all knowing supreme king. It was more like a Jar, somebody who you have almost every right to, as a free man, as a free Viking, to question him.

They had better have facts in the right and you better have some support; but you weren't immediately killed or strung up. They were more pragmatic or more democratic, if you want to call it that, long before any of the European cultures were.

ED: Right. And they developed that whole concept from many of their journeys and travels throughout the various different regions. In understanding the other cultures, they learn from them as well. They purposely had to adapt.

Roderick: I would actually say even more than that. The reason why that came about is because of the Viking or the Norse religion in it.

You didn't need any special priest, really. You didn't need any temple, any place like that. You directly went to the gods. No matter whether you're the lowest level Viking or the Jarl, you can directly go to them. Whereas in Europe, a lot of times the king was your gateway to the god or your bishop or your high priest was the gateway to the god.

The Vikings didn't have that. You could go directly.

ED: Right. They had a direct connection with the higher power like most more spiritually based religions have. Right. Rick, it's been a real pleasure. I just want to say with this interview, we've got 3 minutes left and I'm going to have to cut it off.

Okay. I do appreciate having you here and if you have anything for our readers that you'd like to say to them.

Roderick: I just wanted to urge them to when they look at the Viking and Norse, obviously get beyond the commercialization; the TV, the comic books, all those things. Try to get into what these people were as practical people before we jump in. They were passionate. They were religious. They all had that but the first and foremost, they were practical people and I urge people to see them in that light first.

ED: Again, thank you for being here.

Well, goodbye reader and thank you for another listening, reading another one of our interviews and we look forward to doing more interviews with other people within and without our community that have any knowledge that may need to be shared that are worthwhile sharing. So, and again, Roderick, thank you very much.

Very much. I really always enjoy your company. You know, we've been friends for three years now.

Roderick: Yeah, I think it has been. Thank you

ED: I shall let you go on that note goddess bless take care .

How the World Was Formed

9 Different Myths Explored

by Edward C. Sott

Since the dawn of time mankind has pondered the origins, not only of his species but also the world itself. As humanity evolved from homo-erectus (walking-man) to homo-sapiens (thinking-man) so did the evolution of religion and spirituality. Instead of functioning as strictly and animistic society, man became aware of his environment and began questioning its origin. By observation of nature and the natural order of things and also the realization that he/she was co-creators. The question of our world's origin is still one that is sought after today. However, many myths have evolved around the origins of the world and are reflected in the folklore and stories of various cultures, worldwide.

According to Marta Weigle (b.1944– d.2013) in her book *Creation and Procreation: Feminist Reflections on Mythologies of Cosmogony and Parturition*: originally published in 1989, Nine types of creation myths have been categorized. She by means of analysis of the folklore and mythology of various culture was able to classify them into nine distinct categories. Some of these categories have overlapped where the stories can fit into more than one type.

In this article I will be explaining the meaning of each type and citing one or more examples from the cultures in which they are evidenced. By far this will not be an exhaustive article but will give you a general idea. It will be left up to you, the reader, to if you wish further information, research each of these myths. Use my explanations of the categories as determinants, As you go, about studying the cultures of other regions, you should take a look at their creation myths, for they often tell a great deal about the evolution of the culture.

Listed below are the Nine Types as defined by M. Weigle:

1. Accretion or Conjunction
2. Secretion
3. Sacrifice
4. Division or Consummation
5. Earth-diver
6. Emergence
7. Two Creators
8. Deus faber
9. Ex nihilo

I will explain the meaning of each of these and then cite a sample from a culture which defines each.

1. Accretion or Conjunction: In this form of mythos there is a

convergence of primordial elements (earth, air, fire, and water) which is sometimes stimulated by an outside force, which causes the productive power of the primordial depths to awaken. In these myths the deliberate action of a god is never involved. This type of mythos is also known as Chaos Cosmogony.

Several examples of this myth variant can be seen in these particular myths.

- ◇ Enūma Eliš (Akkadian, Babylonian)
- ◇ Eridu Genesis
- ◇ Greek cosmogonical myth
- ◇ Jamshid
- ◇ Korean creation narratives
- ◇ Kumulipo
- ◇ Mande' creation myth
- ◇ Pangu
- ◇ Serer creation myth
- ◇ Tungusic creation myth
- ◇ Unkulunkulu
- ◇ Väinämöinen
- ◇ Viracocha

2. Secretion: As the name indicates these stories define creation as emanating from the various secretion from the bodies or an organism, such as vomit, sweat, urine, feces, semen, web-spinning, and or parthenogenesis which is the production of an offspring from an unfertilized egg.

These myths generally focus on the birth of life or humans.

- ◇ Birth of humans from Ymir's Sweat (Norse)
- ◇ Human created by the semen of Atum (Egyptian)
- ◇ Spider deity spinning the world from her web (Native American)
- ◇ World created by the thought of a supreme being (Hinduism)

3. Sacrifice: In this form of creation myths, it is often expressed that the creator god would sacrifice some part of his body in order to be a progenitor of life. This includes the shedding of blood which is considered as separate from that of the Secretion myths.

Some examples of this can be seen in the following myths:

- ◇ Enūma Eliš (Akkadian, Babylonian)
- ◇ Dogon Creation Myth (West Africa)
- ◇ Prose Edda (Norse)
- ◇ Rg Veda (Hindu)
- ◇ à Aztec Creation myth

4. Division or Consummation: This form of creation myth often involves the insemination of the divine ova, either through external spraying of the semen upon it or through intercourse. It involves the marriage of the sky-god to the earth mother.

Samples of this creation myth can be found below:

- ◇ The Consummation of Geb and Nut (Egyptian)
- ◇ Coatlicue (Aztec)
- ◇ Enûma Eliš (Akkadian, Babylonian)
- ◇ Gaia and Uranus (Greek)
- ◇ Matsya Purana (Hindu)

5. Earth-Diver: In this form of creation myth, a deity or animal dives into the primordial waters to retrieve the components for the creation of the earth. These myths are found mostly within Native American cultures however they can also be traced to some Indigenous Asian cultures as well, and Australasian Aboriginal.

Samples of this creation myth can be found below:

- ◇ The Ojibwe (Anishinaabe) myth: (Native American)
- ◇ The Mayan creation myth (Mayan)
- ◇ Ainu Creation Myths (Ainu)
- ◇ Cherokee (Native American)
- ◇ Iroquois (Native American)
- ◇ Väinämöinen (Finnish)
- ◇ Yoruba (Nigeria, Africa)
- ◇ Ob-Ugric (Western Siberia)

6. Emergence: In this type of creation myth, the human race ascends from the underworld upon the earth. The world where it originates is comparable to that of the womb and is often too small to contain all of its occupants. They may however pass through several intermediate worlds in order to arrive in the new world. This is reflected of a gradual improvement in humanity, as it evolves and becomes a co-creative force.

Samples of this type of myth can be found below:

- ◇ Hopi Creation Myth (Native American)
- ◇ Maya Creation of the world myth (Meso-American)
- ◇ Dine Bahané (Navajo) (Native American)
- ◇ Zuni creation myth (African)

Two-Creator (Divine Twin): In these types of myths, the primordial battle between good and evil exists. These myths often involve two major players one essential good and one essential evil. They are often sometimes depicted as twins. They can be of the same gender, opposite gender, or even twin gods. Within

these myths an established hierarchy is often created. This is used to primarily denote different social classes. Most of the divine twin aspects are depicted with horses, or as horse deities.

Samples of this type of myth can be found below:

- ◇ The Bible (Genesis) Cain and Abel (Judaic-Christian)
- ◇ Romulus and Remus (Roman)
- ◇ Ville, Ve, Othin (Norse)
- ◇ Many Proto-European Myths
- ◇ Vedic Asvins (Hindu)
- ◇ Castor and Pollux (Greek)
- ◇ Bran and Manawydan (Welsh)
- ◇ The Baltic Usins (Baltic/Balkan Regions) (Latvia)

8. Deus Faber: In these types of myths there is normally one primeval creator god who forges the world from the elements of chaos and creates humanity to inhabit it, either through sculpture or through smithery. The primary emphasis of this myth type is that the creator god who is conducting the fabrication is the progenitor of life.

Samples of this myth can be found below:

- ◇ Genesis [Adam & Eve] (The Bible) (Judaic-Christian)
- ◇ Iroquois (Native American)
- ◇ Thor/Othin [Ask & Embla] (Norse)
- ◇ Tasorinchi: (Machiguenga)
- ◇ The Raven (Tlingit)

9. Ex-Nihilo (out of nothing): This creation myth is defined as the creator manifesting the world out of nothing. Unlike chaos however this nothing can be basically pure thought, words, dreams, or bodily secretions such as breath. This myth is common to many of the monotheistic beliefs.

Below are some examples of the Ex Nihilo myths:

- ◇ The Bible: (Genesis) [Judaic-Christian]
- ◇ The Qur'an (Islam)
- ◇ Io (Polynesia creator myths)
- ◇ Prajapati, Brahma, Vishnu (Hindu)

If you would like further information on any of these particular myth types, please let me know as There is a lot more to the creation story than just these general views. However, we urge you to also do some research of your own, Look up some of these myths and compare them with the others, by doing this you will understand the nature of the cultures. Email me: writer@todayswitch.net put creation myth in the subject line.

The Awareness Shop: Meet the Owners by Lisa and Anton Stewart

Merry Meet,

You have stumbled upon one of the best kept craft secrets, The Awareness Shop, a quintessential magickal store, filled with magickal things and magickal people, and the heart of a spiritual community.



Located in New Paltz, a vibrant and inclusive town, nestled in New York's picturesque Hudson Valley, is a beautiful 1800's Victorian house. In true witchy fashion, it's painted in shades of purple and has a 6-foot-tall black cat, replete with pentacle collar, on the front lawn. You might think a place such as this is hard to miss, but many folks seem unable to find it or are completely unaware of its existence, even though it's been right there, hiding in plain sight, for over 30 years. There's a standing joke that the store is a bit like Platform 9 3/4, it's only accessible when you're ready to encounter it.

But what's it all about, what happens there, and who are the folks behind the purple door?

The store is owned by Lisa Stewart and her husband, Anton, both of whom are published authors and founders of The Stewart Tradition, a Celtic Wiccan Fellowship, honoring a Welsh Celtic pantheon and their accompanying mythologies. The Church of The Eternal Circle, as it is officially called, was recognized as a legal 501 (c)(3) religious organization in 2008 and, as such, can provide pastoral services, including hatches, matches, and dispatches, for its members.

It's a sad fact that too few aspiring Witches have access to more experienced craft members for counsel, relying instead on snippets of information, or quite possibly disinformation, gleaned from social media and the like.

Lisa & Anton consider themselves highly blessed to have been able to create a community for those who are trying to better understand their path, although they steadfastly refuse any attempt to put them on a pedestal, referring to themselves as "nothing more than hokey tour-guides".

It wasn't long after Lisa acquired 'The Purple House' in 1997 that she started holding circles there. Providing, for the first time in the Hudson Valley, a safe and sacred place for those on the path to learn and grow. Over the years this developed into a fully-fledged, initiatory tradition, descended from Gardnerian/Alexandrian Wicca, but with a decidedly Druid-inclusive slant.

The tradition provides a structured framework where seekers can work towards dedication and, through that dedication, progress along the path toward initiation, should they have the courage to face the assay.

Lisa and Anton heartedly recommend attending one of The Eternal Circle's public circles as a great first step for those curious about the craft. Not only does it afford the opportunity to meet a diverse community of individuals who share a common interest, but, perhaps more importantly, it allows a person to experience what it actually feels like to participate in a group ritual.

What happens next depends entirely upon the individual, for everyone's journey is unique to them. For some, working in a group is definitely not for them, and they're quite happy with their solitary practice. For others, attending public circles when they can is all they need. But for a certain few, a fire in the head has been kindled, and they need to know ALL the things!

The good news is that Lisa and Anton, in common with other initiated members of the tradition, have taken an oath to preserve the well-worn path, offering whatever assistance they can to those who would choose to walk upon it.

They will, however, take great pains to remind you that there are no shortcuts on the path, and no 'get-witch-quick' badges are up for grabs here. To set forth on the path is a daunting task as the journey is both long and perilous, for it is a journey into self. It is not possible to undertake this journey riding upon someone else's coat-tails, for the mysteries cannot be experienced by proxy, only by the seeker themselves.

It's often said, "It's not about the destination, it's about the journey", and this is especially true within the craft. Patience is key, for a person can only progress at the rate that is right for them. Both Lisa and Anton have been trudging the path for some appreciable time, with Lisa coming to the craft a little over 36 years ago, and Anton just over 27, yet they still consider themselves to be students of the mysteries.

Nonetheless, as 'hokey tour-guides', they use their experience to reach back and offer a hand of assistance to those that follow along the path, doing their level best to offer counsel, kinship, and guidance when needed. They truly want to help people and offer insights to get folks thinking. But they certainly won't spoon-feed anyone, as they firmly believe it only stunts growth. Questions are encouraged but may well be answered with another question that only the querent themselves can answer.

For those gallant souls desirous to know ALL the things, Lisa and Anton humbly suggest that their year-and-a-day-long course, *Coming Home to The Craft of The Wise*, might be a good place to start. It offers a deep dive into the 'old ways', covering Craft history, Celtic mythology, and the foundational theoretical, practical, and magickal skills needed to be an effective practitioner of the Craft of The Wise. Conducted over twelve monthly sessions, the course culminates with a personal dedication, exactly a year and a day from when it began.

They certainly don't suggest that those taking the course will come to know ALL the things, but for those who make it to dedication, they'll know SOME of the things... particularly the important ones.

While the focus of this magazine, *Today's Witch*, is unashamedly 'witchy', the *Magickal Purple House* isn't just for witches and Wiccans, they also cater to spiritually aware 'normal' people. Many folks, of widely differing religious persuasion, come to The Awareness Shop to learn all kinds of other things which help them progress upon their journey of enlightenment.

Lisa, who's lineage is 4th in line from the Grand-Master, Hawayo Takata, has been a teaching Reiki Master since 1997, having mastered over 700 students both in the US and the UK. It's no surprise that she has garnered an enviable reputation as something of a Reiki purist... perhaps one might even say snob. Her Reiki course is taught over a 16-week period, and includes an internship, where level 2 practitioners are required to demonstrate their practical competence to work on others. Participants in the course are provided with a 174 page, full color, Reiki Master's Training Manual, which details all the information needed to attune others.

There's also a Chakra Crystal Energy Clinician course, taught over 32 hours in 2 to 4 hour segments, leading to certification in this incredible healing art.

Then there's Lisa's Intensive Astrology course, taking the complete beginner, who's not even sure of their sign, to being able to write horoscopes in 12 lessons, and comes with 4 highly regarded textbooks. Astrology is the common thread running through many other subjects relevant to craft knowledge, such as tarot, chakras, herbalism, divination, and, of course, magick.

Also offered is the perennially popular, “Introduction to Herbalism Course”, covering both magickal and medicinal uses of herbs over a total of 24 hours of instruction. The adjunct disciplines of medical astrology and practical magickal are included, offering a deeper understanding of the significance of elemental and planetary rulership within the field of herbalism.

Their most recent offering is an intensive Tarot course, focused on the occult secrets contained within. It includes more than 50 hours of lecture and hands on experience, taught with Lisa and Anton’s forthcoming deck, created in collaboration with the celebrated artist, Dave Field

Plus, there’s a whole slew of shorter classes and workshops on a wide range of magickal, metaphysical, and spiritual subjects, ranging from Shamanism, Scrying, Past-Life work, and so much more.

Thanks to Lisa & Anton’s international connections, The Awareness Shop is fortunate enough to be able to host distinguished guests who frequently come to teach at the store, either in-person or via Zoom, offering their unique insight to the store’s community. Thus far they have hosted widely respected scholars, renowned authors, and celebrated Craft elders, including Kristoffer Hughes, Kate West, Janet Farrah & Gavin Bone, Philip Heselton, Gwilym Morus-Baird, and many more, with yet more to come.

But what about the shop itself? What wonders lie behind the purple door?

On entering, it’s immediately clear that this is indeed a sacred space, feeling warm, welcoming and decidedly magickal all at once. Evocative aromas abound, soft eclectic music creates a wonderful ambience, enhanced by the occasional creaky floorboard, while one’s eyes are captivated by a veritable plethora of fascinating things. One could be forgiven for thinking they’d stepped through a portal and been transported to a magickal store as old as time itself.

While it’s not quite that old, it’s certainly a well-established business. Lisa started The Awareness Shop back in 1993, so it’s not surprising that the Stewarts have forged some strong bonds and friendships with like-minded, artistic folks. Accordingly, much of the shop’s inventory consists of exquisitely crafted, magickal tools for Witches, made by Witches.

There are hand-thrown pottery altar items like salt and water bowls, incense burners, chalices, cauldrons, altar tiles, and more. There’s jewelry, incense, sprays, stickers, hand-sewn altar cloths, tarot pouches, and more. Plus, they have a range of 120 different votive candles, made for specific magickal intentions, as well as those to honor the sabbats, esbats, planets, zodiac signs, chakras, and quite a few deities, all of which are all hand-poured in batches of 20 by Anton himself.

As one might expect, the shop has literally hundreds of books, and over 130 different types of crystals, including many collector’s items. But what surprises first-time visitors the most is their truly mind-boggling array of Tarot and Oracle Cards, having more than 1200 different decks in stock. It’s quite possibly the largest selection you’ll find under one roof, so small wonder they’ve become something of a tarot destination. If you’re planning on going to the store to shop their collection, be sure to allow yourself an hour or two... and expect to leave with a deck or two, or three, or four...

In fact, why not make a day of it and bring the whole tribe or clan. Some of you could get psychic readings or spiritual counselling while others shop, and vice versa. The store is open 7 days a week and there are readers available every day. Most of their readers have been part of the community for many, many years, so you can be assured you’re in capable hands. In fact, The Awareness Shop was voted the Hudson Valley’s Best Psychics by readers of the acclaimed Hudson Valley magazine.

The Stewarts themselves are not exactly devoid of experience when it comes to the tarot. Anton has been reading since 1998, while Lisa has been a professional Astrologer, Psychic and Occultist since 1987. She writes a monthly tarot-scope column for her community, which is now carried in this magazine.

The last Saturday of every month, the store hosts a Psychic Fair where readings are just \$10 per 10 mins. It's their way of giving back to their community, by offering a fun and affordable event.

Community has always been a primary focus for Lisa & Anton. The store offers monthly subscriptions for the Wheel of the Year, allowing folks to learn and grow as a solitary, while staying connected to the shop's magickal community and the work they do. It doesn't matter whether you're round the corner, or half-way round the world, as they ship worldwide. Be sure to check out their online stores (got-deity.com and awarenessshop.com).

And speaking of those who would dearly love to be part of the community, but cannot realistically get to the store, Lisa and Anton are striving to create an online community through the medium of their YouTube Channel ([YouTube.com/@awarenessshop](https://www.youtube.com/@awarenessshop)). They host a weekly podcast called Magickal Monday, and offer guided meditations, along with rituals for magick and turning the wheel. To get the very best value of the station, they would urge you to become a Channel Member, as it will give access to some great perks, such as member-only videos, live-streamed workshops & classes, and even the opportunity of a free reading during their Magickal Monday podcast.

In conclusion, you really should consider connecting with Lisa & Anton and their magickal community, be it through visiting The Awareness Shop in person, or reaching out through any of their social media channels. They'd love to hear from you, and you just might've found your tribe.



Norse Paganism, from Antiquity to Today

by Autumn Stoneflower

Part 1 - Antiquity

This series of articles examines the belief systems of the lands known as modern Scandinavia, which includes present-day Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, as well as the island of Iceland after it was settled in the late Viking Age.

Norse-Germanic Iron and Bronze Ages (1750 BCE-500 BCE)

There were many wheel crosses along with other motifs that were found across Scandinavia that showed a solar-oriented belief system. It is believed to have died out around 500 BC. [1] Many scholars believe it had developed from earlier beliefs found among the Germanic Iron Age people, because of the similarity of Norse-Germanic languages. [2]

Viking Age (793 CE - 1100 CE)

Other than a few figurines, presumed to be Valkyries, very few religious figures have been found. There aren't many extant finds that can give clues how ancient Scandinavians worshipped. [3] There have been over a thousand runestones found across Scandinavia, but they were mostly used for property markers, gravestones, and declarations of voyages taken. [4] There were Mjolnir pendants that were found and Mjolnir was found carved on a few runestones. One was also found that gave thanks to Thor.

Most of what can be determined about ancient Norse religious practices can be found in the Poetic Edda. It tells the rich history of the Norse Gods, the Aesir and the Vanir. The Poetic Edda includes a creation story, explanations of the different worlds, including different afterlives, along with tales of the Gods themselves. It was written in 1270, but contains material that is centuries older. The author is not known, but Bishop Brynjolfur Sveinsson compiled and named the collection. The Poetic Edda comprises Norse mythology stories and myths, heroic skaldic poems and legends, and heroic lays. It functioned as a reference and teachable material for myths, legends, heroes, and Gods. [5]

There are also clues into religious practices in the Sagas, a collection of stories about prominent men that lived during the Viking Era. Because it is a story of people, occasionally their religious practices are mentioned.

While the Vikings traveled all over the world, they originated in modern Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, though the modern borders were very different in this time period. There is evidence that they traveled to Greenland, North America, Europe, and even possibly Asia and Africa. [6]

Creation Story

Before the creation, there was Ginnungagap, a Great Void of dark and uninterrupted silence, but it contained ice. When the ice melt-

ed, a giant was born called Ymir. More creatures, both male and female, emerged from Ymir's legs and armpits. These creatures became the Frost Giants.

More ice melted, and it became a huge cow named Audhumla. Ymir drank the milk and became strong. Audhumla licked salty ice blocks. As she licked, a shape formed the body of a God named Buri. Buri had a son named Bor who married a Frost Giantess Bestla. Their three sons were the Gods Odin, Ve, and Vili. They wanted to bring a new world out of the chaos. They slew Ymir and drowned nearly all the races of Giants. Those that remained lived in Jotunheim and were the sworn enemies of the Gods. In a very gory description, Odin used Ymir's remains to fashion Midgard, the realm of the humans.

Odin also made the moon and sun. The sun was created from sparks that flew from Muspelheim. He put the light in a chariot that was pulled by two horses, Arvak and Alsvin. Later, Odin ordered a girl named Sol to pull the sun, and a boy named Mani to control the moon. They never stop because they're both chased by two hungry wolves. Hati chases the sun and Sköll chases the moon.

According to the Edda, there is a large tree called Yggdrasil that connects their nine worlds. Thanks to the Marvel Universe, most people would recognize Asgard, which is the home of the Aesir Gods. Vanaheim is the home of the Vanir Gods. Midgard is the world of humans, where we live.

However, according to Norse Viking beliefs, there are other worlds with other peoples as well. Alfheim is the world of the "fair" elves. Svartalfheim is the world of the "dark, dusky" elves. Jotunheim is the land of the giants. Nidavellir is the home of the dwarves, who are known for their smithcraft. Niflheim is a world of ice and mist, known as the "world of fog". Muspelheim is a realm of smoke and fire.

Ragnarok is also covered extensively, an event in which the final battle takes place when all the Gods die, including how it starts and what happens. There are many ideas when Ragnarok is supposed to take place. There are even a few outliers who believe that it has already happened.

Deities

There are many Deities in Norse Paganism. They are broken into two different lines that were later unified, the Aesir and Vanir. Examples of the Aesir are: Almatki áss, Baldr, Bil, Bragi, Dellingr, Eir, Forseti, Frigg, Fulla, Gefjon, Gerðr, Gná, Heimdall, Hermóðr, Hlin, Höðr, Hölgabráðr, Hœnir, Iðunn, Ilmr, Irpa, Ítreksjóð, Lóðurr, Lofn, Loki, Máni, Meili, Mímir, Móði, Magni, Nanna, Njörun, Odin, Óðr, Rán, Rindr, Sága, Sif, Sigyn, Sjöfn, Skaði, Snotra, Sól, Syn, Thor, Þorgerðr, Þrúðr, Týr, Ullr, Váli, Vár, Víðarr, Vili, Vé, and Vör. Some examples of the Vanir are: Freyja, Freyr (also called Ingunar and Yngvi), Gersemi, Gullveig, Hnoss, Kvasir, and Njörðr. [7]

Here are some of the most well-known Norse Deities.

Odin - Odin is known for his wisdom, though he is just as likely to hinder than help his petitioners. He hung upside down from Yggdrasil for nine days and was given the knowledge of the runes. This act is often portrayed as the Hanged Man in tarot decks. He gave up one eye in pursuit of wisdom and saw the answers to a thousand mysteries because of it. Odin is the ruler of Asgard and is the God of magic, poetry, prophecy, war, and death. He often rides Sleipnir, an eight-legged horse that was borne by Loki.

Thor - He is the God of thunder, known for his hammer, Mjölnir, which was forged by the dwarves. Thor enjoys fighting and feasting, with his favorite opponents are giants and trolls. He is also associated with fertility, crops, and farming. He once dressed up as Freya to pretend to marry a Frost Giant to get Mjölnir, which was stolen from him. Thor's chariot is pulled by two goats, Tanngrisnir and Tanngjostir.

Freya - Freya is clever and an expert in magic. She was highly sought-after as a bride, but was more interested in sex than marriage. Freya is often mistaken to be a Goddess of love rather than one of sex. She is well-versed in seidr, their form of magic. Freya taught Odin spells and how to see into the future. She has the first pick of warriors who die bravely in battle to her hall, Folkvangr. Freya's chariot is pulled by two cats, Bygul and Trjegul.

Frigg(a) - She is the Goddess of marriage, fertility, motherhood, and the sky. Frigga is married to Odin. She has three maiden helpers who serve her.

Loki - Loki is a shapeshifter and is considered a trickster God. Sometimes his exploits are helpful, while other times he seems malicious. Because of his unpredictable behavior, he is sometimes seen as a villain character, such as the Christian devil. However, because even when Loki seems to make things worse, things turn out all right, there are those who believe that he is not evil at all. He was punished cruelly, by the Aesir. Loki is foretold to lead the giants to war against the Aesir in Ragnarok.

Freyr - He is the brother of Freya and lives in Alfheim, the home of the "fair" elves. Freyr is a deity of fertility, peace, rain, and sunshine. He had an amazing sword that was self-fighting, but he gave it up to marry. According to the lore, he's destined to die at Ragnarok. Frey is often accompanied by Gullinbursti, a golden-bristled boar. His chariot is also pulled by two boars, though not Gullinbursti.

Heimdall - Heimdall has gold teeth and guards the rainbow bridge, known as the Bifrost, which connects Asgard to Midgard (the realm of humans). He can see far distances, needs little sleep, and can hear grass growing.

Idun - Idun is the Goddess of spring, youth, and rebirth. She looks after the fruit of immortality that the Gods can live forever. Idun is known for being cool-headed when faced with taunts. Loki once kidnapped her. The Gods figured it out when they aged, so she was

turned into a nut and returned to Asgard.

Bragi - He is the God of poetry, something that was very important to the Viking people. Bragi is married to Idun and is a very gifted musician and wordsmith.

Sif - Sif is the Goddess of fertility and farming who was known for her beauty. Her hair hung long and shone gold, like wheat, in the sunlight. Loki cut off her golden locks, so the dwarves forged new hair out of gold that could still grow. Not much is known of her other than this story and that she's married to Thor.

Afterlife

There were several different places the Norse could go when they died.

Folkvangr is Freya's hall where the other half of the warriors who fell bravely in battle go. Freya got the first choice of warriors and sent the rest of them to Valhalla.

Valhalla is where the remaining warriors who have fallen bravely in battle go. They drink and fight and prepare to fight during Ragnarok.

Niflheim, also called Hel, is ruled by the Goddess Hel, who is the daughter of Loki. Hel is the afterlife for most people, for those who have died of natural causes. There is a small section of Hel, called Náströnd, which is reserved for oathbreakers, murderers, adulterers, etc. [8]

There are other afterlives for people depending on how they die. For example, the Sea Goddess Rán draws those who die by drowning into her realm with her fishing net.

If a person is particularly devoted to a specific Deity during their life, they can also go to the hall of that Deity when they die.

Religious Practices

"Religious practices often took place outdoors. For example, at Hove in Trøndelag, Norway, offerings were placed at a row of posts bearing images of gods. Terms particularly associated with outdoor worship are vé (shrine) and hörgr (cairn or stone altar)." [9]

"Several of the sagas refer to cult houses or temples, generally called in Old Norse by the term hof. There are detailed descriptions of large temples, including a separate area with images of gods and the sprinkling of sacrificial blood using twigs." [9]

The ancient Norse peoples had three holidays that were referenced in the Poetic Edda. "Odin established the same law in his land that had been in force in Asaland... On winter day (first day of winter) there should be blot for a good year, and in the middle of winter for a good crop; and the third blot should be on summer day, a Victory-blot." [Ynglinga Saga, ch 8] [10]

There is archaeological evidence in several Danish graves to show that human sacrifices were made in the ninth and tenth centuries, but that it happened rarely. Animal sacrifices were more common, with animals found to have been buried at the same time as a human and references to it in the Eddas and Sagas [11].

However, the term 'blot' is often used instead of sacrifice in source material, since the modern idea of a blood sacrifice differs so greatly from the practices of those days. "It was an old custom (forn siðr), when they made a blot (blót), for all the bonders to come to the cult-house (hof) and bring their food which they would need as long as the feast lasted. At that feast, the men should all drink ale. There they also slaughtered all kinds of cattle and horses, and all the blood which flowed from them was called laut, the bowls in which the blood stood were called laut-bowls and laut-teinar, which were made which were made to sprinkle. With all this they should stain the stalls red and likewise the cult-house (hof) walls inside and out and likewise sprinkle it on all the men. The flesh was cooked as meat for the guest feast." (Heimskringla, Hakon the Good ch 14 or ch 16 in most translations, the chapters are not always the same from translation to translation.) [12]

Importation Religious Figures

Völur or Völva, were highly regarded people in Viking Age society. Another word for this station was seiðkonur, a word that roughly translates to magic-wife. These practitioners, mostly women, practiced seiðr, a method of allowing the soul to travel to other worlds to find information. Their methods have also been compared to Shamanism. It was said that they could make a weapon invincible or an enemy restless. There were many otherworldly things that they accomplished.

They had a high respect in society and often traveled to a household that was in great distress. The Völur or Völva could work alone or with assistants, often young girls who were there to learn the art of seiðr-craft. "Their existence has also been confirmed by archaeological finds. Especially female graves, but also a few male burials, have been found containing unusual and strange items not typically found in Viking graves. These include special sticks or wands, intoxicants and unusual collections of small objects, such as owl pellets." [13]

Gothi or Goði were another group of highly regarded people in Viking-Age society. They were priests who kept the religious structure and organized communal feasts. Later, the term became one that was more secular, meaning chieftain or judge.

The most reliable sources about the goðar in Iceland are the Gray Goose Laws, the Landnámabók and the Sturlunga saga. After the settlement of Iceland, a hofgoði was usually a wealthy and respected man in his district, for he had to maintain the communal hall or hof in which community religious observances and feasts were held. [14]

Ancestor Worship and Local Deities

In the 10th century, Norwegian Pagans attempted to coerce the Christian King Haakon to take part in an offering to the Gods by inviting him to drink a toast to the ancestors.[15] This shows that ancestor worship probably took place along with their worship of deities.

There are also some personal deities that have been mentioned in various sources. Haakon Sigurdsson, a late pagan ruler of Norway, had personal or family goddesses.[16]

What's Next

Keep a lookout for Part 2: The Decline of Pagan Religions and the Rise of Christianity and Part 3: The Resurgence of Norse Paganism and Introduction of Asatru in upcoming issues.

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- [3] <https://www.britishmuseum.org/blog/viking-women-warriors-and-valkyries>
- [4] <https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/601594/viking-runestone-facts>
- [5] Hollander, Lee M. Trans. (2012) *The Poetic Edda*. University of Texas Press (2nd edition) introduction.
- [6] Ralphs, Matt (2021). *Norse Myths: Meet the Gods, Monsters, and Heroes of the Vikings*. DK pp. 7-8.
- [7] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%86sir%E2%80%9393Vanir_War
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- [11] Jesch, Judith (2001). *Women in the Viking Age*. Boydell & Brewer. p 24-25.
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- [14] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gothi>
- [15] DuBois, Thomas A. (1999). *Nordic Religions in the Viking Age*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. p. 47.
- [16] Simek, Rudolf (2008). *Dictionary of Northern Mythology* (new ed.). Boydell & Brewer. pp. 326–27 "Þorgerðr Hǫlgabráúðr".

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- Napoli, Donna Jo (2015). *Treasury of Norse Mythology: Stories of Intrigue, Trickery, Love, and Revenge*. National Geographic.
- Ralphs, Matt (2021). *Norse Myths: Meet the Gods, Monsters, and Heroes of the Vikings*. DK



It is our mission to create a safe space for survivors who have endured trafficking or abuse through cults or dangerous religious sects no matter the background. Here at P.A.T, we strive to bridge the gap for survivors and offer services that meets these individuals' needs, so they can integrate back into society. Here at P.A.T, it is our intention to raise awareness to this cause while facilitating the needs of the individual. It is our mission to be the liaison between survivors to get them the help that is needed while being a safe place to help them through every step of the process. Here at P.A.T, we strive to educate and protect individuals at all cost.

Dictionary of Pagan Terms

P-Words

Pagan: When the early Church came on the scene, the popularity of Pagan traditions proved to be a real problem. Saint's days replaced Pagan holidays in an attempt to displace the old gods and portray them as evil spirits. Similarly, magick wells and trees became Gospel Oaks and Holy Springs. Today, Pagans usually follow a myriad of Divine images or believe that there are many faces and facets to the same God/dess. Their worship is diversified, often being based in nature.² From the Latin *paganus*, country-dweller.. Today used as a general term for the followers of Wicca and other magickal, shamanistic and polytheistic religions. Naturally, Christians have their own peculiar definition of this word. It can be interchanged with Neo-Pagan.³ A follower of any nature-based religion, especially those with European roots, such as Wicca, Druidism, and Asatru. From the Latin *paganus* or 'country-dweller', a member of the community or resident of the district.(4) A member of one portion of the magickal community with polytheistic overtones and a strong emphasis on living in harmony with nature.

Pantheism: A doctrine that identifies Deity with the universe and its phenomena; or the worship of all gods. Many Witches consider the God/dess and the universe to be identical, and all gods to be valid facets or aspects of Deity.

Pen of Art: A pen especially for magickal work or recording information in one's Book of Shadows; some witches use a quill pen, while others prefer a ballpoint or a computer keyboard.

Pendulum: A tool of Divination consisting of a string attached to a heavy object, such as a quartz crystal, root or ring. The free end of the string is held in the hand, the elbow steadied against a flat surface, and a question asked. The movement of the heavy object's swing determines the answer. A rotation indicates yes or positive energy. A back and forth swing signals the opposite. (There are many methods of deciphering the pendulum's movements; use those that work best for you). This is a tool that contacts the psychic mind.² A divinatory tool consisting of a small weight on a thread or a fine chain. It can be made of crystal, stone, wood, or other materials. Its use is called radiesthesia or dowsing.(3) A type of divinatory system in which an object is suspended by string and its movements observed for interpretive values.

Pentacle/Pentagram: A primary symbol of Wicca. Represents the four elements and the fifth element of Spirit, or Minds, through which humanity transcends the four elements. Usually depicted as a continuously drawn five-pointed star within a circle, although it is sometimes not enclosed within a circle, and indeed Wiccans are likely to favor any five-pointed star motif in jewelry, decor, etc., as a representative of the pentacle. A Wiccan altar usually includes a pentacle as a central tool, and pentagrams are drawn in the air during acts of evocation, invocation, and banishing. 2Also known as the Seal of Solomon, it was originally a symbol of health and life. It was probably derived from the pentagram shape which appears when you cut an apple core in half. Later, it became known as the Witch's cross and is believed to represent all four elements, (the fifth point being the self). 3(or pentacle) A five pointed star drawn with five continuous strokes used as a sacred or magickal symbol. 4A ritual object (usually a circular piece of wood, metal, clay, etc.) upon which a five-pointed star (Pentagram) is inscribed, painted on or engraved. It represents the element of Earth. The words "pentagram" and "pentacle" are not interchangeable, though they understandably cause some confusion. 5Pentagram enclosed in a circle. Magic tool representing the elemental earth. Often made of wood, clay or metal.

Pentacle: One of the four elemental tools; and engraved disc representing the Earth's Element. It is normally the centerpiece of a Wiccan altar. 2A disc or metal, ceramic, or wood with a pentagram and other symbols inscribed on it. It is a symbol of the element Earth, and sometimes salt or cakes are placed on it. 3Pentagram enclosed in a circle. Magic tool representing elemental earth. Often made of wood, clay, or metal.

Pentagram: A five-pointed star. An upright pentagram (i.e., with a single point uppermost) represents (1) a human being (astride with arms outstretched) or (2) the four Elements (q.v) governed by the fifth, Spirit. An inverted pentagram (i.e., with a single point downwards) represents Spirit still subservient to the four Elements; it is generally seen as a black magick symbol, except when it is used as the symbol of a second-degree initiate, the implication there being that he or she is still on the way to full development. ² A starlike, five-pointed figure of very ancient origin, used magickally for blessing, protection, and balance. The five points stand for Earth, Air, Fire, Water, and Spirit. Witches often wear a silver pentagram encircled with one point up to symbolize Spirit guiding and balancing the elements. Also called Pentalpha, the 'endless knot', and other names.

Perfect Love and Perfect Trust: A Wiccan ideal; we begin by working to create them within the coven, and expand from there.

Persona: The 'comforting cloak' of the Ego (q.v); the self-image which the Ego builds up to reassure itself and to present to the world.

Personal Power: That energy which sustains our bodies. It ultimately originates from the Goddess and God (or, rather, the power behind Them). We first absorb it from our biological mothers within the womb, and, later, from food, water, the Moon and Sun, and other natural objects. We release personal power during stress, exercise, sex, conception and childbirth. Magick is often movement of personal power for a specific goal.

Phoenix: Constellation visible from the Southern Hemisphere, which makes a rare appearance in the Northern Hemisphere at Samhain. Named for the mythical bird that rises from its own ashes once every 500 years.

Planchette: A form of the Ouija board.

Planes: The various levels of being and activity - Spiritual, Mental, Astral, Etheric and Physical.

Planetary Correspondence: The placement of planets and their astrological significance are sometimes used to create specific effects in magick. In this respect, a plant might be picked or a ritual might take place at a special time in order to help increase its effectiveness.

Platonism: The Philosophy of Plato, mainly the view asserting ideal forms as an absolute and eternal reality of which phenomena of the world are an imperfect and transitory reflection.

Plotinian: A form of Neoplatonism involving a more complex mystical overview. Basic to its tenets is the concept of the One Ultimate Principle from which emanates all others. Redemption of the soul through various levels of existence is another primary focus of this belief system.

Polarity: The concept of equal, opposite energies. The Eastern yin/yang is a perfect example. Yin is cold; Yang is hot. Other examples of polarity: Goddess/God, night/day, Moon/Sun, birth/death, dark/light, Psychic Mind/Conscious Mind. Universal balance. ²The interaction of two differing polarity-energies can raise enormous amounts of magickal energy, and this insight is incorporated into most traditions of Wicca, as well as alchemy and other philosophies. The female-male polarity is most commonly discussed, but of course there are others as well; Fire/Water, Yin/Yang, Darkness/Light, and so on.

Poltergeist: Translated from two words meaning "uproar" and "ghost". These are mischievous and often unhappy spirits who make themselves known by noises or other means. ²A "noisy ghost"; usually a manifestation of much uncontrolled energy, with knockings, hurled or transported objects, activity involving fire, water, etc. Frequently of human (usually incarnate human) origin, albeit caused unknowingly; sometimes with other activity also, attracted by the force.

Polytheism: A belief in many gods. Witches are polytheists to the extent that they believe in the aspects or facets of Deity. However, they could well be called dualists or monotheists. A saying popular among many Witches is, "All Goddess are one Goddess; All Gods are one God; Goddess and God are one."

Poppet: A small image of a person, perhaps made of cloth or plant life, which is used in a magickal act.

Power: Energy drawn from natural sources, then concentrated and directed within a ritual for magickal purposes.

Power Bag: A Shaman's (See also) source of power; a container of cloth animal skin and so on in which quartz crystals, stones, drums, rattles, and other magickal objects are placed.

Power Pouch: A small bundle into which various tokens are placed to provide the bearer with specific types of energy.

Prâna: The vital force of the Cosmos as it operates on the Etheric level; it permeates this and other solar systems, and every living organism is charged with a concentration of it.(2) The Life Principle; the breath of life.

Pranic Energy: The energy that permeates everything. It is particularly useful in healing work as it revitalizes and re-energizes. From the Sanskrit word prana meaning "breath".

Prayer: The act of focusing one's attention on Deity and engaging in communication. In Wicca, prayer is directed to the Goddess and God (or sometimes, to one or the other).

Pre-Birth State: The dimension inhabited by human beings before birth.

Precession: The subtle shift of the direction of the Earth's axis among the stars.

Precognition: Psychic awareness of future events.

Priest/Priestess: Anyone who has been initiated into a Wiccan tradition. ²Every initiated witch is regarded as a priest or priestess, the priest-function being seen as inherent in every human being who is prepared to activate it.

Priest: The American Heritage Dictionary defines "priest" as "a person having the authority to perform and administer religious rites." We could say that a Wiccan Priest is one who performs Wiccan religious rites at will, authority be damned. However, the definition of shaman from the same dictionary also fits; one who "acts as a medium between the visible world and the invisible spirit world and who practices magick . . . for healing, divination, and control over natural events." A Wiccan Priest is also a spiritual teacher and counselor.

Priestess: The same dictionary defines "priestess" as "a woman who presides over especially pagan rites". Add the functions of a priest as defines above, and that seems accurate enough.

Projection: The psychological mechanism of subconsciously crediting (or discrediting) another person with qualities or shortcomings which are in fact elements of one's own psyche, so that one can confront them while avoiding the truth that one is really confronting oneself. (See also Astral Projection.

Projective Energy: That which is electrical, forward-moving, active. Projective energy is protective. See also Receptive Energy.

Projective Hand: In right-handed people, the right hand. In left-handed, the left. This is the hand through which magickal energy passes from the body. See also Receptive hand.² The hand that is normally used for manual activities such as writing, peeling apples and dialing telephones is symbolically thought to be the point at which personal power is sent from the body. In ritual, personal power, is visualized as streaming out from the palm or fingers of the hand for various magickal goals. This is also the hand in which tools such as the Athame and wand are held. Ambidextrous persons simply choose which hand to utilize for this purpose. Compare with Receptive Hand.

Psyche: The total non-physical make-up of a human being. ²The non-material part of a psycho-physical being.

Psychic: Someone who is apparently able to understand or use powers outside the normal range of physical law. These abilities are believed to be linked with the mind.

Psychic Attack: The supposed direction of negative energy toward another person to harm them; a "hex" or "curse". These are rare today, if not nonexistent. The direction of malevolent thoughts or feelings toward another person, whether consciously or unconsciously, that can create illness or disruption in that person's life.

Psychic Aura: The force-field which emanated from the astral body.

Psychic Awareness: The act of being consciously psychic, in which the Psychic Mind and the Conscious Mind are linked and working in harmony.

Psychic Mind: The subconscious, or deep conscious mind, in which we receive psychic impulses. The psychic mind is at work when we sleep, dream, meditate, employ divination, and experience intuition, or unbidden psychic awareness, as well as practice magick. It is our direct link with Nature and Deity, and with the larger, non-physical world around us. Other related terms: Divination is a ritual process which utilizes the Conscious Mind to contact the psychic mind. Intuition is a term used to describe psychic information which unexpectedly reaches the conscious mind.

Psychic Vampirism: A person's ability to draw or "feed off" the energy of others.

Psychic Gifts: Abilities such as clairvoyance, telepathy, and healing.

Psychism: The act of being consciously psychic, in which the psychic mind and the conscious mind are linked and working in harmony. Ritual consciousness is a form of psychism.⁽²⁾ The natural ability (latent or otherwise) that all people have to "sense" things beyond the normal levels of awareness.

Psychometry: The psychic 'reading' of a material object, and its associations and history, by handling it.

Understanding the Elements

The Witch's Pyramid

By Edward Sott

A long time ago I was introduced to the concept of the Witch's Pyramid. This concept was basically an understanding of the principles of the elements, why we summon them, and what they have to teach and offer us.

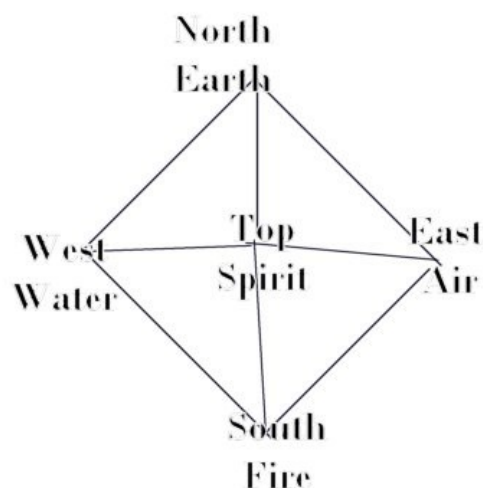
It's been my observation however over the course of the years that this model of teaching has been lost. Many of the books currently written have totally disregarded this.

They simply say summon the elements to lend their energies to your rituals. But, then they neglect to inform you of what those energies are.

There might be many interpretations of the elements and what they have to teach us, and more often than not, these interpretations are so vague that there is no basic understanding of them.

In this article I shall endeavor to demonstrate, not only the concept of the Witch's Pyramid, but also why and what these energies in the four quarters actually are lending to our rites.

First I'm going to start with an Illustration of the pyramid



In most traditions of modern Wicca I have seen that many of the covens start their rituals in the East. Mostly because that's where the sun rises and they associate it with the fact of the start of the day, or a new beginning.

In my tradition however I follow the teachings of the pyramid and begin my ritual in the North Quarter. In the next few paragraphs I will explain why.

Let us first take a look at the actual teachings of the five elements and their meanings.

- ◆ North— (Tascere) - Feminine—To Be Silent— Earth— Passive
- ◆ East— (Noscere) - Masculine— To Know—Air— Active
- ◆ South— (Velle) - Masculine—To Will—Fire—Active
- ◆ West— (Audere) - Feminine— To Dare—Water— Passive
- ◆ Top—(Ire) - Neutral— To Evolve—Spirit.— Balanced

I equate the Witch's Pyramid with the first three goals of the Witch. in the aspect of these goals are

1. Know thyself
2. Know thy Craft
3. Practice thy craft with wisdom

In order to "know thyself" one needs to first silence the mind of all the unnecessary distractions of the world and of the old teachings that one has acquired throughout their lives. One has to go back into the shadows and re-establish a connection with the subconscious and super conscious awareness of oneself. This cannot be done in a state of constant mobility. One can only reach the state of self-awareness when one quiets the mind and meditates.

In Native American culture one of the first practices taught before even entering a vision quest or seeking answers is that of the Stone People.

They would enter a cave and sit for two days in a state of meditation to connect with the elements of the Earth particularly the stones and open their inner senses to the messages given. Thus, preparing them for the next part of their journey into self-discovery.

But still why would the earth represent silence? This question can be answered very easily actually. The earth moves very silently, it takes thousands of years for a few pebbles of sand to eventually become a mountain. In the token of the earth element we are taught to have patience, and as we grow we soon will be aware enough to apply the rest of the learnings we gather from the other elements. So as She (the Earth) moves around us so too we can silently await in meditation the state of enlightenment that which she offers us.

Now we are going to proceed to the East. Which is the element of Air and teaches us "To Know".

Once you have exited the silence you come out into the open, the Air surrounds you carrying within it stimulants to all five of your senses. One must remember that the Soul/Spirit is comprised of energy. Energy within itself cannot carry or assimilate awareness as it doesn't have the equipment to do so. Thus it borrows this mortal vehicle which has the capability of the five senses.

These senses are "TASTE, TOUCH, SMELL, SIGHT, and SOUND. And the Air carries stimulants to all of these within it. We utilize these five senses to assimilate knowledge and awareness of our surrounding. Even when one sense is diminished the other senses are heightened to provide an adequate awareness.

Thus because the Air carries these stimulants within it can be concluded that indeed it would teach us. "To Know" The Air is a masculine— Active force.

So, now we have looked at the Earth and Air and we realize that each of them suit the meanings which have been ascribed to them in the pyramid. To be Silent or To Silence being the Earth, and To Know being the Air.

Now we're going to take a look at the next two element fire and water.

I'm now going to take a look at the Fire Element located in the South Quarter, and what it has to teach us and why it is doing so.

The teaching of the Fire Element is To Will. We have to take a close look at Fire to understand why this is so. When we consider how active an element fire is we realize that it once it is ignited it will consume everything in its path until it runs either out of material or out of oxygen. While doing this it also however emits a lot of continuous energy in the form of heat.

Much like The Will also acts in the same accord. Once we have conceived an idea or notion (Earth the Silence), and then we bring it forth into our awareness on how to implement it (Air To Know), then we start to bring it into action (Fire "To Will") this process regularly occurs with every action we take. In the case of magick this also applies. The same process is enacted in order for us to begin to manifest not only the energy but the physical actions necessary to achieve success.

Fire is of course a Masculine and Active force and like the Air relies heavily on maintaining that action in order to manifest itself and stay active.

And finally we'll take a look at the West whose teaching is that of the (Water "To Dare"). Why would water teach us to dare one may ask. Well we need to look at water from the perspective of her movement. She will either cut through, move over, go under, or take the shape of an object which she is interacting with. She teaches us adaptability and the courage and aware-

ness to utilize the tools of the other elements to help achieve our goals .

With all these elements in place we have to now look at the final element. This element stands at the apex of the pyramid and that is (The Spirit "To Evolve")

This is the ultimate goal of the spirit which is to combine all the other elements and thus reach it's totality in awareness and to experience everything and every choice.

The Spirit is comprised of nothing but energy. It doesn't have the physical ability to actually manifest itself as any of the other elements. It does however inhabit the form of a mortal vehicle (The Body) in order to experience the workings of all the others elements in combination.

And this is the summation of the Witches Pyramid. In essence every time we evoke the quarters we call upon the teachings of all of the elements to become manifest and then thus build the magickal influences we are seeking.

There are a couple of things to further take note of when we are discussing the Witch's Pyramid.

When you look at the cross quarter you will notice that each are perfectly balanced with the other example Earth/N/Fem and Fire/S/Mas. being opposite and Air/E/Mas. and Water/W/Fem. Two masculine energies you will also note are both active elements, where the two feminine ones are passive. This is a common theme in western mysticism as well as in eastern philosophy you will note also at the top of the pyramid the Spirit sits in the center being of neither masculine nor feminine energy but a full collation of both polarities in perfect harmonious balance. We often see this same representation in the Yin/Yang symbol of Taoism.



Gods and Goddesses of the World
South Eastern Europe
(Slavic)

Chors, Hurs, Khars, Khors, Khorye, Khros, Khrs, Khurs

Origin:	Pre-Christian Slav [Balkans]
Other Names:	Hurs, Khars, Khors, Khorye, Khros, Khrs, Khurs
Type:	Sun God/or Moon God, Health, and Hunting
Literary Sources:	<i>Nestor Chronicle, Primary Chronicle Letopis, The Tale of Igor's Campaign, Sermon and Apocalypse of the Holy Apostles, Conversion of the Three Saints.</i>
Regions of Worship:	Throughout the Balkan peninsula, Poland, and Belorussia, Novgorod



Information:

Khors was a very prominent Sun deity worshipped in the Balkan regions from with mention of his worship dating back to the 12th Century CE. In general he was considered to be a sun deity, however many scholars of the latter text due to mention of his path through the sky associate him with the moon. In comparison to other pantheons he would be equivocated with Surya (Hindu), Apollo (Roman), Ra (Egyptian).

Like many other gods in what are considered to be polytheist religions he does have a direct lineage. below is a general chart showing the relationship to him and other gods of the Slavic pantheon.

NAME OF DEITY	GENDER	ROLE	SPOUSE	# OF CHILDREN	# OF SIBLINGS
Khors	Male	Sun God	Zorya Utrennyaya	0	7

Iconography & Artistic Depiction: Several depictions are mentioned of Khors from various regions. In many of the folklore sources he is portrayed as a handsome youth, normally seen dancing in circles with young people. This was a reflection of his connection to light and festivities. In other depictions he is depicted as a rider with curly golden hair who drives a chariot across the sky, symbolizing the daily journey of the sun. In later Baltic and Christianized Baltic Iconography artists depicted him with a human torso, goat's legs, and a dog's head with several horns, often with a sacred fire which burned day and night, linking him to fire and the sun. He was symbolized with words and objects related to circles and fire, connecting words like "cross", "wheel", "circle", and "spark" (lightning) to him, further reinforcing his solar and fiery attributes.

Weapons: Though he wielded no known weapons, he is often depicted with fire and lightning. These served as a direct correlation to that of most solar deities.

Animals: His sacred animals were horses, and the rooster both solar related.

Symbolism: The Solar Wheel, and Rays of the Sun.

Festivals: There were two festivals associated with him, the Winter Solstice Festival: Celebrated around December 21st, and a festival known as Kolyada Festival: which was celebrated in mid-winter. which celebrated the rebirth of the sun.

March 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Matronalia
2	3	4	5	6	7	8 International Woman's Day
9	10	11	12	13 Full Worm Moon	14 Lunar Eclipse	15
16	17 Saint Patrick's Day	18 Celtic Tree Month of Alder Begins	19	20 Ostara	21	22
23	24	25 Lady Day	26	27	28	29 New Moon, Partial Solar Eclipse
30	31					

March 1—Matronalia

March 8—International Woman's Day

March 13—Full Worm Moon

March 14—Lunar Eclipse

March 17—St. Patrick's Day

March 18—Celtic Tree Month of Alder Begins

March 20—Ostara

March 25—Lady Day

March 29—New Moon, Partial Solar Eclipse

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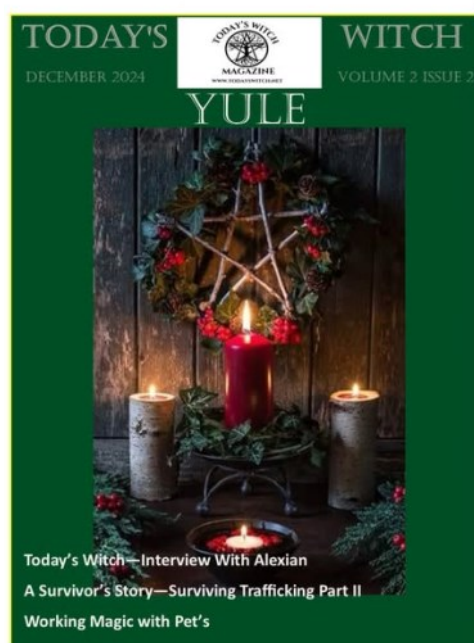
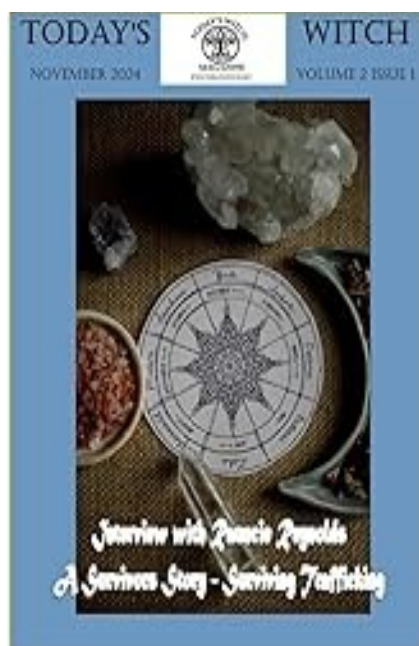
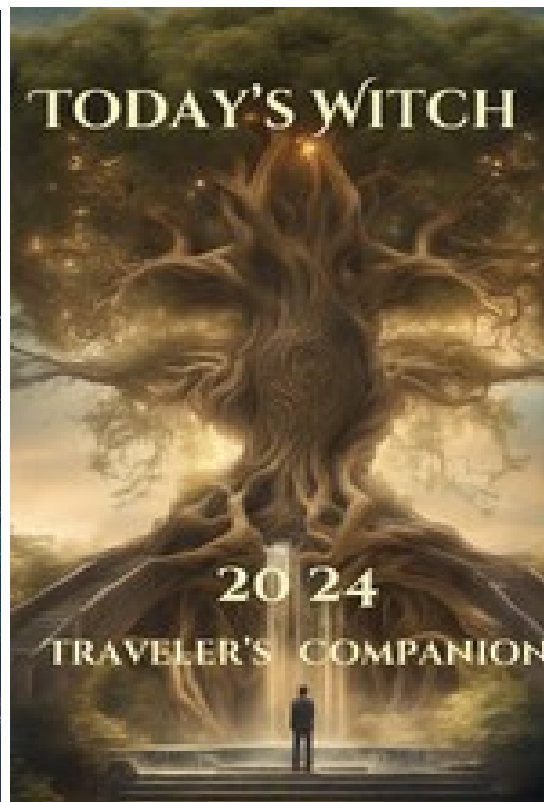
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