

"Worship and Spirituality During and Between the Asatru Holidays"

(Fall 1999 Revision)

This is how I practice Norse Heathenism/Asatru for the major blotar (rituals). These are normally group rituals. Calendars vary for different groups. Gamlinginn published a list of these some years back; I don't believe I still have it. Many use a modified 8-spoked Wiccan Wheel of the Year. Others have monthly rituals. In Lexington, Kentucky we have made a conscious effort to try to be in harmony with actual local climatic conditions. Our yearly calendar tends to run something like this:

1. Frey Blot for Charming of the Plow in late February/Early March. We used to do it on Groundhog's Day/Feb. 2 until one year we got the message it was too early. Ground frozen solid, blizzard....
2. Ostara Blot around the Spring Equinox. Good time to honor Idunna as well; some see her as the same as Ostara.
3. Nerthus Blot around the 1st of May. I've also done this one at Trothmoot for 4 years running; a detailed description of this blot is on my webpage.
4. Freya Blot for Midsummer.
5. Loaf Fest/Frey Blot sometime around the 1st of August.
6. Freya/Disablot (to Freya and the Disir, guardian female ancestor spirits) around the Fall Equinox.
7. Odin's Rune Rite sometime in October. See my web page for my friend Badger's version of this ritual, originally written by Steve Wilson, who btw is alive and well and practicing Heathenism with his family as a household group.
8. Tyr Blot in early November, followed by Einherjar Sumbel for the heros in Valhalla, and military personnel and other heros we have known and loved.
9. Thor Blot around the Winter Solstice. Sometimes there is another Nerthus Blot around that time too. Although it doesn't really jibe with surviving lore, some folks think of the Sun as reborn from Nerthus at that time. Personally, I take it to mean that the returning sunlight will (eventually) wake Nerthus up. It's warm enough here that spring bulbs begin to sprout in January, although they don't bloom until March. A Sunna Blot would be appropriate both here and at Midsummer/Summer Solstice; although most of us don't really seem to see Sunna as a fully personified Goddess like Freya and the Asynjur, although interestingly, most seem to see Nerthus, the Earth Mother that way!

If you leave out the Winter Blot to Nerthus and/or Sunna, that makes 9 blotar. Cool! I hadn't noticed that before. Sometimes we do an All Gods' Blot; but those seem to lack "oomph". We've sometimes done a Balder Blot sometime during the Summer. We do public seidhr four times a year. Some of us in the Kentucky Heathen community also attend Moots.

Here's what I do every week, usually right before I go to bed at night. I don't claim this is the only way to conduct daily worship; I'm just giving it as an example. I light the candles on the family altar (an eclectic one since I share it with my eclectic

Neopagan partner due to space considerations), light a small stick of incense (non-overpowering ones are best in my opinion), greet the Gods, Goddesses and other Wights to be honored that day, (I turn North to do that although the altar faces roughly East due to space considerations), and pour a small libation of mead when I have it (and I usually do). I check the wards and the charged household guardian (a created thought-form so not precisely a house-wight, I believe) while I'm at it. Wight, btw, is an old word meaning spirit or being, "entity," if you would. I meditate and do journey work with my power animals (I am a seidhmadhr in the Hrafnar tradition) from time to time. If I forget, they let me know!

Here's my weekly "schedule." It is based in part on the Deities associated with the names of the Days of the Week in English.

Sunday (Sun-day): Balder and Nanna. Also Forseti, their son. They can be seen as having solar characteristics. Sunna fits fine here too, of course. I like amber incense for this day.

Monday (Moon-day): Mani, of course. I invoke the Asynjur (Aesir Goddesses) here; by personal choice. Neopagan influence? Maybe. Yes, I know Mani's a guy! My own take on Sun and Moon genders is this (Oh, no, a Theology lesson): the Sun and Moon each have BOTH masculine and feminine energies. Different cultures pick up on one or the other or both due to climatic factors, among other things. There's no getting away from that 28-day cycle! One reason I personally choose to honor Mother Frigga (I see her as Allmother at least in the context of Odin's consort). I honor by name: Frigga, the Norns, and Hela. All the other Asynjur collectively. Jasmine or Rose incense.

Tuesday (Tyr's Day): Tyr and Zisa. Zisa is a Swabian German Goddess incorrectly identified by Tacitus (who told us about Nerthus but seems to have got that one right) with Isis, in his book *Germania* written in 98 A.D. = Anno Draugi :-). Anyway, we know from Lokasenna in the Poetic Edda that there is a Mrs. Tyr, and her worshippers in contemporary Heathendom report she's quite happy to answer to "Zisa," whether or not that was her name, or one of her names, in the "Olden Days." Cinnamon incense.

Wednesday (Odin's/Woden's Day): Odin, and don't forget Loki, his blood-brother. Don't expect Odin to accept your libation to him if you don't offer to Loki as well. There's the little matter of an oath! I jokingly (?) say I pay Loki off every Wednesday and occasionally ask favors in return. The Einherjar, and the Valkyries too are with Odin, although many are with Freya as well. Frankincense incense.

Thursday (Thor's Day): Thor, Sif, and family (Magni, Modhi, Thrud, Ullr). Musk incense. There's something bad wrong with you if you don't like Thor!

Friday (Freya's or Frigga's day; I'll let scholars argue over that). Then of course, some think that in Heathen England they were the same Goddess! Be that as it may: I honor Freya, the Valkyries, and the Disir on this day. Nerthus too, I personally see her as Mother to Frey and Freya, which seems to be a common belief in contemporary Heathendom. Strawberry or some sort of flower incense.

Saturday (Saeter's or Saturn's Day): Saeter was an obscure Anglo-Saxon Deity, perhaps an indigenous agricultural God or else the Roman Saturn, whom I believe was sometimes identified with Frey. In any case, here's where I, as a

Freysgodhi, honor Frey on my calendar. Njordh, as his father and Skadhi as his stepmother fit logically here. I also honor the Dwarves (fine folk once you learn their ways and get to know them), Alfar (male ancestor spirits) and Landwights. Please note that some folks may disagree with my definition of Alfar. Another theological tidbit: my own opinion is that Disir and Alfar were to an extent catchall terms. The ancients weren't as precise in their terminology as certain modern-day nitpickers. Disir were female ancestors, minor Goddesses, Valkyries; no precise line was drawn. Alfar were the forefathers, especially in the burial mounds, where they could easily blend on over into Landwights, even Dwarves as beings of/under the Earth. I know of at least two cases where modern-day men who work with metal things were offered by the Dwarves to become one of their number after death. Frey rules over the (Light) Elves, whom I identify with the Landwights. He received Alfheim as a Tooth-Gift (gift given when a baby got its first tooth). Interesting custom. If the baby made it that long, it had a fighting chance. Plus, the little tykes deserve something for all that suffering. I know some adults who've cut teeth (usually wisdom teeth), and they assure me that they understand why babies are cranky and ill-tempered while teething! I also work Ran and Aegir in here, mostly because of the presence of Njordh, their fellow Sea-Deity. My friend Thorr Sheil (please be sure to check out the links to his and his wife Audrey's sites from my web page), says Saturday NIGHT is Loki's "day," since that is when all the fun (and, I might add mayhem) is going on! Patchouly incense.

Some folks draw a rune from their rune pouch every morning to meditate on and to guide them during the day. I don't personally, but it seems like a good idea. While I perform these daily rites alone, they could easily be adapted to couple or family use. Please note that your calendar will be somewhat different, within a basic framework. For example, it would be quite odd to honor Thor on Wednesday and Odin on Thursday, but there's always one... Much of the schedule is more flexible than that. Your theological underpinnings will vary a bit from mine, too. Good. This was never a monolithic religion, or one concerned with trying to harmonize every mythological and/or theological inconsistency. I hope it stays that way, too!

Hail the Aesir and Vanir!

Hail all holy Wights!

Jordsvin