

Our Heathen Faith

An introduction to
Anglo-Saxon Paganism
& Mediations of the
Anglo-Saxon Rune
Poems
By
Thunorwine

© 2003 by Jim Davis

Wes thu hal!
My name is Thunorwine
and I am a heathen.
My family and friends
worship with me
the Holy Ones
of our European ancestors.

The Holy Ones
we worship are:
Tiw, Woden, Frige, Thunor, Ing Frea,
Freo, Hel, the Aelfs, the Ides
and other helpful wights.
We ask for their protection
against the unholy wights
who might seek to harm us
and our world Middangeard.
These are the Old English names
for the Holy Ones.
Other heathens
worship the same Holy Ones
using the names
of their ancestors' languages.
We often worship together
with heathens called Asatruar
who worship the Holy Ones
in a Norse/Icelandic form.

Non-heathens feel our faith
is all made up
Derived from myths,
old fictional sagas
and therefore not true.
They could not be more wrong!
Our Holy Lore rings true within,
it is still the basis of a world view
that still speaks to our souls,
even now
at the beginning of the 21st century.
I feel even when we take to the stars
and spread humankind
throughout the galaxies.
We will still recount our Holy Lore.
It is important to know,
from our religious lore,
how things came to be,
what the world really is,
and what will happen to the world,
including the our future wyrd.

Our universe had no beginning.
It has always been here
in some form
or another.
It will always exist
in one form
or another.
No one made it
and no one can destroy it.
It only exists
and changes over time
into something else,
but it is never destroyed.

The Holy Ones
are the creative forces of nature
who formed the worlds
and all its many peoples.
They struggle against the Eotens
who are destructive forces of nature
in order to preserved the worlds.
Thunor is our god
who keeps the Eotens at bay,
He prevents them
from taking over our world,
our Middangeard.
He is a friend to all humankind.

Our universe is a big tree.
Its name is Eormensyll,
the World Tree.
This tree is made up of nine worlds.
It holds up
all the worlds
in its branches
and roots.
Human beings were parts of this tree
which broke off.
floating to the shores of
Middangeard.
Woden and his brothers
gave them life
and other gifts.
So we can truly say
we are kin to trees
and are made up of the stuff
that holds the universe together.

The nine worlds
and their inhabitants are:

(1) Nifolham:
it is a land of ice
and our lore
does not give it any inhabitants.

(2) Esageard:
it is where our gods
and goddesses live;
it is a most Holy place,
those who live honorable lives
go to the hall of their god.

(3) Eotenham:
it is the home of the Eotens
who are hostile to humans
and are kept at bay by our god
Thunor.

(4) Aelfham:
it is the home of the Aelfs
who are our friends;
they often play on Middangeard.

(5) Middangeard:
it is where we live,
perform our deeds
and leave our legacies.

(6) Muspell:
it is the home of the fire Eotens
who will attack at the end of time
and throw fire across the worlds.

(7) Hell:
it is the place of the worlds dead
both human and non-human,
awaiting rebirth.

(8) Sweartaelfham:
it is the home of the sweartaelfs
who make magickal objects
and are the deities of technology.

(9) Wanaham:
it the home of the Wena deities
who govern fertility
and sexuality.

They are very close to humankind.

The human being has many parts;
we are very complex beings.
In our tradition
the body
and soul has eleven parts:

- (1) the lic (our body);
- 2) the hyde (our smartness);
- (3) the mynd (our memory);
- (4) the willa (our will to do what we want);
- (5) the aethem (breathe of life or life force);
- (6) the hama (an energy that surrounds our lic);
- (7) the orlaeg (personal wyrd or karma);
- (8) the maegen (personal spiritual

power);

(9) the faecce (our guardian spirit usually an animal);

(10) the mod (our self; our personal feeling of unity);

and (11) the wod (passion, strong feelings).

Our lives are shaped by wyrd.

Wyrd is the force of our past
and current actions
that form our future.

Wyrd can be affected
by our good
and bad deeds.

Good deeds
helps build up a better wyrd for us
and bad deeds create a debt
that we must repay.

This usually results to bad things
happening to us
(and even our loved ones)
in this life
or a future one.

Our wyrd is not just our own.
Our wyrd affects our family and kin.
And their wyrd affects each of us.
All families have their own wyrds
as do groups of families.
Towns, counties, states and nations
have their own wyrds
that affect all.
All of us are interconnected
by many connections of wyrd.
So bad deeds affect all
as well as our good deeds.
With this knowledge
we know what we need to do
to make a better world.

Our tradition gives us some guidelines
to help us do good
and honorable deeds.

These were called thews
by our ancestors.

We honor our ancestors
by keeping their thews.

Twelve in number are these thews:

(1) boldness (not to fear life and to
take charge of one's wyrd);

(2) steadfastness (this is to accept
what life and wyrd throws at us);

(3) troth (this is to be loyal to those
we have kinship or oath ties);

(4) give-fullness (generosity);

(5) guestliness (to always treat guests
kindly);

(6) sooth (to be truthful and honest);

(7) wrake (sometimes it is necessary to defend one's self, family, nation and world against others who use force against them):

(8) equality (to treat other equally as people);

(9) friendship (to make friends with others outside of our families);

(10) freedom (to stay free and prevent others from losing theirs);

(11) wisdom (to always learn and to share what you learn with others);

and

(12) busyship (to work for one's self, family, kin, nation, and world).

Oath making
and oath keeping
are very important aspects of our
faith.

To make an oath
is to promise to do a deed
before the Holy Ones
and witnesses
(usually done at husel or sýmbel).

This oath is subject to a veto
by one's family and friends.

They have a right to do so
as one's oath
can affect them negatively.

Thus they have an interest
in your oath;
your wyrd is not just your own.

This also protect us
from making a rash oath.

Once an oath is made it must be
carried out
to the best of our abilities.

Once accomplished
then one needs to brag
of one's deed

at the next symbol.
This is to fully set
the deed into wyrd
as well as
to inspire others to do good deeds.

We honor our Holy Ones
through the reciting of bedes
(prayers),
sharing food and mead at a husel,
and through the act of Holy drinking
at symbel.

Bedes are prayers to the Holy Ones
and helpful Wights
which are spoken out loud.
These can be offered individually
or as a part
of a larger group's worship.

The Husel is a Holy feast
usually held
at set times during the year
(though many also perform husel
after being blessed unexpectedly).
At husel
we invite the Holy Ones
to come and share,
food and drink
with our families and friends.
It is a coming together of family
and friends in Holy Communion
with the Holy Ones
and all good Wights.
We invite to share our feast,
with any who we feel close,
regardless of sex, religion, race or
sexual orientation.
I deeply feel
that the Holy Ones accept all
who keep peace with them.

The Symbol is a Holy drinking rite.
It uses alcoholic drink
as the key
to unlock the mysteries of our souls
and to allow the Holy Ones
to inspire us.
Oaths and bragging
are performed during symbol.

While we can honor
and share
with the Holy Ones at any time.
It is traditional
to do so at set times during the year.
These set times
are called the Holy Tides.
There are four major Tides:
Yule, Ostara, Mid-summer
and Hallows.
All heathens need to celebrate
at least these four Holy Tides.
The minor Tides are optional,
though many also celebrate:
Thunorsblot, Ewemeoluc, Walburgis,
Freysblot, Hlaefmaest
and Einjerhar Day.

Some of us do more
than sharing with the Holy Ones;
some investigate the deeper mysteries.
Runes are one such mystery.
They are Woden's gift to humankind.
Used rightly they can give us great
insight into our wyrd.
We should never use them
as a form of entertainment for others.

There are even deeper
magickal mysteries
in our faith known
by many
but practiced by few.
As these mysteries are not essential
for all of us to master,
we should give our support
to those heathen
who do dedicate
themselves to their mastery.

For final thoughts
in this summary of heathen faith,
we shall speak of our own
and the universes' final fate.

We believe there is not just one life
but many.
This has not been our first life
nor will it be our last.
Doing honorable deed,
while avoiding dishonorable ones,
is the way to Esageard.
There one dwell's
in the halls of the Holy Ones.
Others who live just so-so lives
go to Hel's hall.
The Goddess Hel prepares halls
for both the good
and for the evil.
Some do evil
so wrong
that they go to the Great Dragon
and have to start
at the bottom of evolution again.
Over all, after a certain period of time
allocated by wyrd,
one returns to Middangeard
usually in one's family line
or to those who they have developed
close ties of wyrd

over numerous rebirths.

And what of the universes ultimate
wyrd?

The World Tree may shake,
it may suffer.

All nine worlds upon it
may even pass away,
but the World Tree endures forever.
Given time she sprouts new fruit,
new worlds.

Meditations on the
Anglo-Saxon Rune Poem

Feoh: wealth

Wealth should flow,
constantly circulating
to promote the common good.

Sellers, buyers, investors,
and the taxing authorities
portion out between them
the incomes of the folk.

Money sitting idle
can only cause harm.

Ur: the wild ox

One must grab life's challenges

by the horn's

to ride the waves of one's wyrd.

Before such a powerful one

the world becomes one's domain.

Thorn: the thorn

Computers crash
and planes fall out the skies.
That is the nature of things
and not always evil in intent.
Even good people
sometimes cause
other good people harm.

Os: language

The worlds came into being thru
the crashing sounds of fire and ice.

Sound and the maker sounds
the divine word is spoken.

Wisdom and tradition
give comfort to the folk
in times of great change.

Rad: riding

When one sits in one's home
everything looks so easy;
talk is easier than action.
To walk in another's shoes
and do better,
that is the most difficult of all tasks.

Cen: the torch

The inner light
which is never extinguished
brightens the dark weary world.
This body is a great hall;
the mind sits in the body's high seat.
The call to faith
a torch carrying procession.

Gyfu: the gift

The giver and the giftee
form a circle of obligation.
As these are the bonds
which form true community.
Tho one can give too much
and receive back
gifts one could do without.

Wyn: joy

It is bliss

to reach the state of happiness:

no suffering, no sorrows, great joy.

To have the necessities of life

and to be able to help others.

Even in a reversal of fortune

one who is truly free

can still find joy

in this world

and in other realms.

Haegl: hail

Even a good life has its days.

As a hard rain good for the crops
turns to a hail storm that flattens them.

Even then

the bad times don't last;

even the thickest hail

melts away.

Nyd: need

Need is the manifestation of desire;
the bondage of will
to the external object.

It can be oppressive
but it can also be the key to liberation.

In organizing with others
bonds of oppression can be broken.

Is: ice

Ice driven back by fire;
mists of crashing cosmic forces.
It is the body of all things.

Ger: the year

The sky wolves have retreated;

Sunna warms the land below.

Frey and Freyja have

bestowed upon us

a great bounty

for all the folk.

Eoh: the yew

Symbol of Yggdrasil

the yew is strong

and holds many worlds

within its branches.

It offers much support

to those who grow it.

Peorth: the hall

In the shelter of the world tree
many great halls have been built.
So that all peoples can go
to be with their patron deity
according to the rules of their faith.
No one can be excluded
from the protection of the Tree
save those who exclude themselves
by evil deeds.

Eolhx: a water plant that bites

Even a plant can cause harm
if used without caution;
danger lurks even in the safest place.

Sigel: the sun

Sunna is the goddess of hope.

She points out the way
and gives us the energy for life's
work.

Tir: a star

Tyr is the way.
He is the sky father
who guides us
thru life winding paths,
never abandons us
to darkness.

Beorc: the birch

Your green leaves bloom early
giving us knowledge
that Spring has come again.

Eh: the horse

Embodiment of godly power
thought the body of the horse
people share its might.

Man: the human being

Be happy in life.

Bring happiness to your friends
and relations.

Yet be aware
that death is always waiting.

Lagu: the sea

The sea is the cauldron of chaos;
creative matrix,
playground of Ran,
from which human beings came.

Ing: the god of fertility

He moves across the lands;
visiting his farmer friends
giving gifts of great bounty.

Ethel: native land

One should loves the land
they live upon
sharing in its rights and duties.
In turn, the land will protect its
friends
if its friends respect it.

Daeg: the day

We shine in the light of the deities.

Tho day is followed by night;

life by death,

we know that after night

comes a new day.

So death is followed by new life

in whatever way that arises.

Ac: the oak

The daughter of the great tree
she provides us and animals
with food and shelter.

Aesc: the ash

Like the mighty ash
may we have the power
to withstand the attacks
of our enemies

Yr: the bow

Getting on a jet

I fly straight as an arrow
to my destination.

Iar: a sea creature

The world serpent has us all
in its grip;
lord of eternity
the cycle of birth and death.

Ear: the clay

Death is the end of all.

Even the most powerful
and wealthy people
are seized in the end.

Yet don't despair,

for life goes on

and so do all

which die

come back to some form of life.

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only