

# Summer Solstice (Litha)

*Ritual conducted by Samantha and Rachel  
(Friday 1/12/06)*

## ***Background Information...***

## **Litha**

### **The Summer Solstice**

The Summer Solstice falls at the precise moment when the Sun's power is at its zenith. "Solstice" is Latin for "sun stands still" and the Summer Solstice is so named because to the naked eye the sun appears stationary in its northern and southern progression. It is the longest day and shortest night of the year. From the moment of Summer Solstice, the Sun immediately begins to wane. The journey into the harvest season has begun. (1)

The Summer Solstice is one of the three Spirit Nights of the year, the other two being Beltaine and Samhain. At these times the veil between worlds is exceptionally thin. (2)

Druids celebrated the Summer Solstice as the wedding of Heaven and Earth. The Goddess manifests as Mother Earth and God as Sun King. Bonfires were lit to celebrate the Sun at its height of power and to ask the Sun not to withdraw into winter darkness. These festivals would include dancers adorned in garlands and flowers, and young men jumping through the tall flames. At the great stone circle, Stonehenge, England, the sun rises over the heel stone. Only one heel stone stands now, though there is consideration that there was another heel stone, the sun would rise between the two pillars.

The Summer Solstice is a time to reflect on the growth of the season. Seeds planted in the Earth as well as are own seeds of our souls. A time of cleansing and renewal. A time of joyous Love and growth.

**Symbols:** Fire to celebrate the power of the sun, Sun Wheels, God Eyes, Mother Goddess, Ripening fruits, Sun Dials, Feathers, and Swords/Blades.

**Element:** Fire.

**Colours:** White, Red, Maize Yellow or Golden Yellow, Green, Blue and Tan.

**Magic:** Healings, growth spells, empowerment spells, and love magic are all incredibly potent at this time.

## **Celtic Traditions**

The Celts believed that there were two suns, the sun of the waxing year and the sun of the waning year. Litha signifies the beginning of the Holly Kings reign which is depicted by a battle between the God of the waxing year, the Oak King, and the God of the waning year, the Holly King. The two brothers each represent the light and dark halves of the year, respectively. On this day, the Oak King must give way to his twin, the Holly King, whose reign will continue until the Winter Solstice, when the Oak King is reborn.

The separation of the light and dark halves of the year has nothing to do with good and evil. Light signifies growth and expansion; dark means withdrawal and rest. Both are necessary. The holly, as an evergreen, is a reminder to us from the Holly King that even when all life is apparently gone from the Earth in the cold winter months, he holds life in trust for us. It is he who brings his brother's fertility to completion.

Today, the Litha is still celebrated around the world - most notably in England at Stonehenge and Avebury, where thousands still gather to welcome the sunrise on the Summer Solstice. (3)

## **Rose Moon**

### **Gemini to Cancer**

The Summer Solstice falls within the Cancer moon which is depicted by the Celtic Tree Calendar as the Rose Moon. The Rose Moon is represented by the Oak tree which symbolizes strength, luck, love, potency, health and money.

The Oak tree was the power totem of the Druids and was central to their teachings- In fact, the word "druid" is said to mean "knowledge of the oak." The Druids believed they could reach the great gateway to the other world through the energetic doorway of the oak. (4)

## **Vivienne**

### **The Lady of the Lake**

Vivienne is also known as the Lady of the Lake and Nimue. She is the protector of the land's scared waters and keeper of the earth's most precious treasures. She lived beneath the waves of a pristine lake that rested silently near the foot of a great mountain. Her mother was Danu, goddess mother of an ancient race called the Tuatha De Danann, her father the God of All, Dagda. Her sister was Brigit, goddess of fire and her brother Manannan, god of the sea. (5)

Vivienne was the foster-mother of Sir Lancelot and raised him beneath the waters of her Lake. She is, however, best known for her presentation to King Arthur of his magical sword Excalibur, through the intervention of the King's druidic advisor, Merlin, who was constantly worried that his monarch would fall in battle. She is also well known for her relationship with Merlin.

Mythologically, the Celtic Lady of the Lake was known as a Gwraegedd Nnnwn (or Lake Faerie). These fae were often married to mortal men. They were lovely, blonde women who enjoyed female company and aiding mortal women and children. The Lady of the Lake was also considered the Queen of the Isle of Maidens.

Nimue was a lesser Celtic Moon Goddess. Her name meant "fate" and "she who lives" and was said to reside in the Fairy wood of Broceliande. She was also connected to the Goddess Morgan.

Archetypically, Nimue and the Lady of the Lake represented the primal initiation into the Otherworld. She reigned over knowledge, was the foster mother, and the mistress of wisdom. (6)

## **The Merlin**

Merlin first appears in records of the early 10th century as a mere prophet but his role gradually evolved into that of magician, prophet. He was the illegitimate son of a monastic Princess of Dyfed

and was given the name Emrys (or Ambrosius) at his birth in Caer-Fyrddin (Carmarthen). He only later became known as Merlin, a Latinized version of the Welsh word, Myrddin, taken from the place of his birth.

Throughout early Arthurian literature, the Merlin has developed from a Welsh, mystical Druid to a more human, magical being. Whether appearing in the guise of a druidic stag-god, a furry changeling child, or a romantic, love-crazed sorcerer, the Merlin exhibits qualities both of the original Welsh bard and the later, fantastic enchanter. (7)

The Merlin is known by many names including Merddin, Myrddin, Merlyn and Emrys. He is the great sorcerer, druid, magician and is associated with the fairy religion of the Goddess. A wild man of the woods with prophetic skills, according to the Old Welsh traditions. It is also said he learned all his magic from the Goddess under her many names of Morgan, Viviane, Nimue, Fairy Queen and Lady of the Lake. He is thought to sleep in a hidden crystal cave.

The Merlin rules over illusion, shape-shifting, herbs, healing, woodlands, nature, protection, counselling, prophecy, divination, psychic abilities, foreseeing, crystal reading, tarot, magic, rituals, spells, incantations, artisans and smiths. (8)

## **Ritual Incense**

### **Oak**

The most sacred and royal of all the trees. Magical rites are often performed in groves of oaks, and the most powerful mistletoe grows on these trees. Oak represents the sun and the element of fire, and has the powers of fertility, protection and longevity.

### **Dragons Blood**

Dragon's Blood represents Mars and the element of fire, and has the powers of energy, purification and protection. A pinch of Dragon's Blood may be added to incenses to increase their potency and effectiveness, to love incenses or sachets, or may be placed under the mattress to cure impotency.

### **Frankincense**

Frankincense represents the sun and the element of fire, and has the powers of protection, purification, consecration and exorcism. Frankincense may be burnt to raise vibrations and protect, or used to induce visions and aid meditation. Burn during sunrise rituals of all kinds.

### **Lavender**

Lavender represents Mercury and the element of air, and has the powers of love, purification and protection. Lavender is thrown onto the midsummer bonfires as a sacrifice to the ancient gods.

## **The Gods Eye**

At Midsummer, make a God's Eye as a protective talisman. This Sabbat celebrates the Sun at the height of its glory. As the Sun is a symbol of protection, making this South American Sun amulet is a perfect way to cast your Midsummer spell for protection.

By alternating the coloured yarn, the finished charm indeed looks like an eye, in this case, the eye of the God watching over us. Its four points symbolize the two solstices and the two equinoxes.

## **Instructions**

As you make your God's Eye, it is important to charge it with your intent. Visualise the safety of your family, belongings and home as you work. The more detailed your visualisation, the more powerful the talisman will be.

1. Loop the yarn and hold against the back of the top stick. Wrap the yarn around both the top stick and the loop. This will become your loop to hang the God's Eye with.

2. Take the yarn and wrap it over and around the bottom stick, then over and around the next, over and around the next, and so on, making sure that the hanging loop is at the back.

3. Keep doing that until approx one third of the stick is covered.

4. Tie a different colour string onto the old one with a tight knot.

5. Repeat steps 2 + 3 until complete.

6. To finish the last colour, wrap around the bottom stick and tie at the back to one of the ends left from changing colours.

As a finishing touch, tie several streamers to the bottom and/or horizontal sticks. Crystals could be attached to the four ends of the sticks and it can be decorated with feathers, shells, or other magically significant items.

Hang the talisman above your door.

### ***The Ritual...***

Smudging then stepping over the balefire in the Northern quarter.  
Wreath then anointing

From the Eastern quarter, moving sunwise(anti-clockwise) 3 times...  
"By Air and by Fire may this circle be blessed, cleansed and sanctified"

From the Western quarter, moving sunwise 3 times saying...  
"By Water and by Earth may this circle be blessed, cleansed and sanctified"

Casting the circle 3 times...  
"I cast this circle in perfect love and perfect trust"

### **EAST**

I call upon the Guardians of the Watchtowers of the East  
Element of Air, Ruler of the Fae  
Lend us your power and protection  
Witness our rite this night  
Welcome

## **NORTH**

I call upon the Guardians of the Watchtowers of the North  
Element of Fire, Ruler of the Fae  
Lend us your power and protection  
Witness our rite this night  
Welcome

## **WEST**

I call upon the Guardians of the Watchtowers of the West  
Element of Water, Ruler of the Fae  
Lend us your power and protection  
Witness our rite this night  
Welcome

## **SOUTH**

I call upon the Guardians of the Watchtowers of the South  
Element of Earth, Ruler of the Fae  
Lend us your power and protection  
Witness our rite this night  
Welcome

## **GODDESS**

Goddess Vivienne  
Queen of the Fae, Lady of the Lake  
We call you to join us this blessed summer evening  
Honour us with the gift of intuition and strength  
Share with us your knowledge and wisdom  
So Mote It Be

## **GOD**

Oh Great Merlin  
Gifted Druid, Magician and Bard  
We call you to join us this blessed summer evening  
Honour us with the gift of healing and natural ability  
Share with us your knowledge and wisdom  
So Mote It Be

## **Meditation**

### **Activity**

Gods Eyes Talisman  
To be consecrated / cleansed through the incense smoke.

## **Closing**

### **GODDESS**

Goddess Vivienne

Queen of the Fae, Lady of the Lake

Thank you for honouring us with your presence this blessed evening

Hail and Farewell

### **GOD**

Oh Great Merlin

Gifted Druid, Magician and Bard

Thank you for honouring us with your presence this blessed evening

Hail and Farewell

### **SOUTH**

Guardians of the Watchtowers of the South

Element of Earth, Ruler of the Fae

Thank you for your presence and protection this night

Hail and Farewell

### **WEST**

Guardians of the Watchtowers of the West

Element of Water, Ruler of the Fae

Thank you for your presence and protection this night

Hail and Farewell

### **NORTH**

Guardians of the Watchtowers of the North

Element of Fire, Ruler of the Fae

Thank you for your presence and protection this night

Hail and Farewell

### **EAST**

Guardians of the Watchtowers of the East

Element of Air, Ruler of the Fae

Thank you for your presence and protection this night

Hail and Farewell

May this circle be open but unbroken  
May the peace of the Goddess be ever in our hearts.  
Merry Meet and Merry Part  
and Merry Meet again.



*\* This ritual is a combination of the authors' original ideas and information obtained from various books and/or internet sources.*

### **References**

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