

Ancient Sea Island Continuum



Lughnasadh

August 2, 2014

Lughnasadh, known to Medieval Christians as Lammass (Loaf-Mass), seems to arrive before we are quite ready for it—it always carries the poignancy of change. Like all of the pagan high holidays, Lughnasadh has a dark mystery buried within it like a treasure. But what if that central mystery makes us uncomfortable? And it is one that we wish to run away from?

The central theme of Lughnasadh, the one we cannot avoid, is sacrifice. Sacrifice is something we resist, difficult and unpopular in our modern mindset. We are encouraged by our consumerism to think that we can have everything all at once, even though we know that is not true. Older, more mature and magical cultures than ours, actually understood this. Sometimes, in order to have something we love, we have to give up something else that we love. When we read about the sacrifices of ancient people, whether those sacrifices be bull calf or bundles of grain, they always gave their best.

Many pagan traditions celebrate Lughnasadh with a dramatized rite of the grain god being cut down for the winter by the Goddess's harvest scythe. To Pagans, the ancient cycle says that the god will return. However, trusting pure cycles belies the true nature of sacrifice. Sacrifice is not like taking a vacation where we know we will come back, intact and just the same. It is losing something beloved and known in a gamble with the unknown. It is giving something up to a cause larger than ourselves, without being quite sure what, if anything, we will get back in return. In sacrifice, there are no guarantees. In fact, there cannot be a sacrifice if we know the outcome.

Sometimes, something you love with all your life has to be surrendered and then you hope for the best. Can you release a beloved form, or way of being, valuable because it has value to you, to provide fertility to your future? Can you give up something you love for being able to live in your true worth? We all understand that the cost of something is what you are willing to give up to get it.

*The word 'sacrifice' comes from the Latin **sacer**, which means 'to make holy.' No matter what wisdom traditions we follow, throughout the earth and among all peoples, our meaningful, devoted actions add more light to what is already full of light. When we are willing to take a risk on behalf of a higher good that goes beyond our immediate gratification and comfort, the Universe hears us. May what we give up be a sacrifice to our future self, to the possibilities of happiness and greater service on this Earth. Ask yourself, are you prepared to sacrifice?*

From www.elephantjournal.com/2013/07/a-lammas-mystery-sacrifice-transformation-of-the-heart

RITUAL SPACE PREPARATION

Place required items on altar (a pentacle, a crow, bowls of water & salt, sage). Arrange dining tables in a square with altar table against wall as one side. Set dining chairs to face altar tables. Place food & ritual elements on altar table. Place table for Help of Beaufort donations to right. Place table for UUFB donation cauldron to left.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Guide *UUFB welcome, visitors, & announcements, then...*

BLESSING

"Blessed Be"

Shawna Carol

Goddess Chants

Guide

Merry meet!

This beautiful song speaks a gentle praise of the One Divine Light known by many Names. Partake of the bowls of water and salt for your blessing as we sing "Blessed Be".

All

All is growing and expanding.

Blessed be — The Light has come.

All is growing and expanding.

Blessed be — The Light has come

(repeat

And a Love that's everlasting.

all to

Blessed be — The Light has come.

beginning

Blessed be, blessed. Blessed be, blessed.

thrice)

QUARTERS

"Air Moves Us"

Cathleen Shell

Goddess Chants

All

Air moves us

Fire transforms us

Water shapes us

(repeat

Earth heals us

all to

And the balance of the wheel

beginning

Goes round and round

four

And the balance of the wheel goes round.

times)

And the balance of the wheel

(repeat to

Goes round and round.

(diminishing)

All gather their food while singing the invocations for Goddess & God, then return to their tables and wait for the sacrifice...

GODDESS INVOCATION

<i>"Snake Woman"</i>	<i>Starhawk</i>	<i>Ritual Music from Reclaiming</i>
Women	Snake Woman, shedding Her skin. Shedding, shedding, shedding Her skin. Bird Woman taking flight. Taking, taking, taking flight. Star Woman shining bright. Shining, shining, shining bright Moon Woman riding the night. Riding, riding, riding the night. Blossom Woman opening wide. Opening, opening, opening wide. Snake Woman, shedding Her skin. Shedding, shedding, shedding Her skin.	<i>(repeat to beginning twice)</i>

GOD INVOCATION

<i>"Lugh's Song"</i>	<i>Raven Moonshadow</i>	<i>Ritual Music from Reclaiming</i>
Men	O tell me why, O tell me why Tell me why must the clouds come to darken the sky? O tell me why, O tell me why Tell me why must the clouds come to darken the sky? This is the wake of Lugh the Sun King. He lost His life on the Solstice day. This is the wake of Lugh the Sun King. He steps into the dark and guides the way.	
All	<i>(repeat all verses two more times)</i>	

SACRFICE

"Helvegen"

Wardruna

Yggdrasil

All listen to the song and wonder as magick is worked here...

Guide

May you forever be guarded and guided,
And never lose hope! So mote it be!

We are the children of the Sun.
Our Magickal Harvest Supper has now begun.

Now, all share much music, mirth, magick, and munching!

MEANING OF LUGHNASADH

"John Barleycorn"

Pierce Campbell

Songs of the Drink & of the Sea

All

There were three men came out of the west,
Their fortunes for to try,
And these three men made a solemn vow,
John Barleycorn must die.

They've ploughed, they've sowed,
They've harrowed him in,
Threwed clods upon his head,
And these three men made a solemn vow,
John Barleycorn is dead.

They've let him lie for a long, long time
Till the rain from heaven did fall,
Then little Sir John popped up his head,
And soon amazed them all.

They've let him stand till midsummer day
When he looked both pale and wan,
And little Sir John's grown a long, long beard
And so become a man.

They've hired men with the scythes so sharp
To cut him off at the knee,
They rolled him and tied him by the waist,
And served him most barbarously.

They've hired men with the sharp pitchforks
Who pricked him to the heart,
And the loader he served him worse than that,
For he bound him to the cart.

They've wheeled him round and round the field
Till they came unto a barn,
And there they've made a solemn mow
Of poor John Barleycorn.

They've hired men with the crab-tree sticks
To strip the skin from bone,
And the miller he has served him worse than that,
For he's ground him between two stones.

Now, here's little Sir John in the nut-brown bowl,
And brandy in a glass;
And little Sir John in the nut-brown bowl
Is the strongest man at last.

For the huntsman he can't hunt the fox,
Nor so loudly blow his horn,
And the tinker he can't mend kettles nor pots
Without a little Barleycorn.

