

Mabon ~ Autumn Equinox, The Wiccan Way

Contributed by Marian Preselo

20th - 23rd September

Mabon, the Festival of Thanksgiving, Harvest Home, Alban Efed The days are often warm and sun blessed but the evenings are drawing in and oft times a hint of chilliness. The hedgerows, between dew laden gossamer webs are bedecked with plump red berries of hawthorn, juicy blackberries and scarlet hips. The leaves are tinged golden, bronze and russet at their edges. The swallows that have swooped and soared all summer are now gathering on the overhead wires in preparation for their flight southwards to warmer climes ~ autumn approaches. Mabon is the second harvest festival in the Wheel of the Year, following Lughnasadh and preceding Samhain. Like Ostara, or the Spring Equinox, it is a solar festival, marking the balance point of light and dark but, from this point the days grow shorter and the nights gain length, as the sun god marks the downward passage through the cycle of the year.

Hence, it too is a festival of re balance after intensive work. In our own lives it is a time of personal harvest; to reap what we have sown and look back over the past year to see if projects that we began have borne fruit. It is also a time for finishing up old projects and plans and planting the seeds for new enterprises or a change in lifestyle. Take time out to look at your life and reassess where you are going, what you have so far achieved and what it is that you are still seeking. In this way, Mabon will truly be a time of celebration and balance. This Sabbat is symbolised by the double spiral, a going-in and a returning, to remind us, as we begin the journey inwards towards the darkest point of the year ~ that winter is always followed by summer. We honour the dark as being another part of the light and light as being part of darkness ~ the two halves of one whole. Late September ~ 29th ~ marks the feast of Michaelmas. This celebration is held in honour of Michael, Arch Angel of the sun and man's protector against the forces of darkness. The exact date of the autumnal equinox fluctuates each calendar year between September 20th and 23rd. The full moon closest to the Autumn Equinox is known as the "Harvest Moon," since farmers would also harvest their crops during the night with the light of the full moon to aid them. This season was known as the Harvesting or Reaping Tide, a time of inward turning as well as celebration. It was a time of great cooperation within the community, of celebration and hard work to ensure that as much as possible of every foodstuff was gathered in and preserved against the barren months of winter. It is a lovely idea to create a small ritual to celebrate one's own harvest and to sow the seeds of new opportunities. A Personal Ritual for Mabon You will need to create a simple altar. Cover a small table (a coffee table is ideal) with orange cloth. Orange is an autumn colour and perfect for Mabon. Place on the altar an orange candle A bowl of water, A bowl filled with some sand on which is placed a charcoal block to burn Mabon incense. A bowl filled with earth or sea salt. An offering of some fruit/seeds, laid in front of your candle. Also one 3 inch squares of orange paper and a black gel ink pen. Autumn leaves and crystals ~ the colours of Mabon are deep golds, reds, and browns. The stones associated with this day would be orange or yellow topaz and carnelian. Mabon incense To burn incense that is gathered from the seasonal bounty as the wheel of the year turns is special. Each plant, or flower has a particular quality. Always ask permission of the plant or tree first and give thanks for their generosity. This is then dried over a period of time in a warm place. I like to use a variety of leaves and dried berries, herbs, oils and even nuts. © Grind together three parts frankincense resin 1 part dried oak leaves 1 part dried pine or cypress leaves, 1 part dried sage and rosemary Selection of 1 part dried blackberries, rowan berries, dried hazelnuts and sweet chestnuts & grains of wheat 1 part cinnamon stick add to this seven drops of cypress or pine oil. If it's not possible to prepare your own, then an incense stick of sandalwood or pine is good. When performing a Ritual, then the specific properties of each plant would be researched to add more power to the ceremony. Additionally the phase of the moon, the astrological influence of each day of the week and the time of day would be significant. Choose a quiet time when you will not be disturbed, sitting comfortably, take three deep breaths to centre yourself. Then call upon your Guardian Angels, or God/Creator or other spirit guides/Goddesses and ask them to surround you in love and light during this exercise. Visualise a circle of light totally surrounding you and your sacred space Light the charcoal and sprinkle on some of the incense Light the single candle Hold the candle up in front of you and say, "I am blessed by the element of Fire." Hold the incense up and say, "I am blessed by the element of Air." Hold the bowl of earth or sea salt up and say, "I am blessed by the element of Earth." Finally hold up the bowl of water and say, "I am blessed by the element of Water." Hold up the seed and fruit offering and dedicate to the bounty of Mother Earth. Ask yourself these seasonal questions. What is my personal harvest? What have I brought into manifestation this year? What can I do to honour the generosity of Mother Earth that sustains me? How might I thank my loved ones and acquaintances who have supported my creativity this year?

Then sitting quietly, think about what you would most like to manifest into your life at this time, whether it be a new job/career, financial abundance, a new house, a wonderful relationship or to start a family. Whatever you wish for must make your heart sing, and be for your benefit. When you have thought of what you would like to manifest - write on your orange paper, in as much detail as possible. Really be specific in the details of this, e.g. if you are manifesting a house, state whether it's to be rented or bought, max price, area, number of rooms, size of gardens etc. This is the time to really make a wish list of what you would like in your life to help you. Remember you will manifest what you wish, so be very careful what you ask for. Write the list in the present tense starting with "Thank you for" and concluding with "and it harm none". Fold the paper up and hold within your hands. Close your eyes, connect to your Angels/Guides and let them know that this is what you wish to manifest. Visualise giving it to the Angels/Guides, so that they can take care of it for you. The most important thing here is to let go of it completely - once

you have passed it over to them, believe that the Universe will take care of it for you and believe that it will come to you. Thank them for taking care of your manifestations for you. Later put the paper in a special place. In the mythic cycle of the Goddess, the Mother Goddess is completing the physical activity of creation, at Mabon, she begins her physical transition to crone with her descent towards the inner world of Spirit. During your Mabon ceremony, consciously change your own energy from activity to rest by slowing down your breathing. Feel the earth's pull beneath you, and know yourself as a part of her, ritually slowing down, going inward and under to seek the wisdom and strength during the resting period. Spend a few minutes exploring this harmonising, nurturing, balancing energy. Then begin to bring your awareness back to your surrounding and feel yourself fully grounded and balanced. Say, "I give thanks to all the Angels, Guides, and Beings of Light for their assistance in this ceremony and I now bid them farewell and open this sacred space." See the sphere of white protective light slowly fade away. Take three deep breaths again, to bring you back to your body and then snuff out the candle. Bury the incense (once it is cool) and the fruit/seeds you gave as an offering in earth or soil in a flowerpot. Additionally the same for the salt/earth and water, thereby giving thanks to Mother Earth. ~~~~~In the ways of the ancients, we bring in and celebrate the full-fledged autumn Harvest in thanksgiving for the abundance of the Earth Mother. By honouring each season of Gaia in the Wheel of the Year, we connect with her soul. Not only are we nurtured, but we are able to reflect love and healing to this planet and the Universe ~ weaving much magic and light into the web of life. Bright Mabon Blessings!

© Text & photographs Marian Preselo 2008 Marian is a natural intuitive and "wise woman", she walks the ways between this world and the realms of the unseen with ease and many people call upon her skills not only as a professional Holistic Healer, but also in helping them resolve paranormal incidents. Marian runs workshops and does much to make "the old ways" accessible to those who show an interest in this gentle path of spirituality. She lives in the ancient market town of Wimborne, in a smuggler's house that has been occupied by four generations of her family
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