

Meditations on the Sacred Places of Gwyn

by Sister Aelfwyn

Thursday 14th September

Meditation 2: The Temple of Nodens Lydney

A story of Nodens/Nudd father of Gwyn ap Nudd

Welcoming and Housekeeping -

Honouring spirits of place and land acknowledgement -

Introduction – Hayley

Here within the northern hemisphere we are approaching the watery time of the Autumn Equinox. Some of us may be experiencing the Misty Autumnal mornings, feeling the dampness in the air, sensing the magic and mystery that can come with the season. Perhaps our thoughts turn to ways of honouring the sacred waters, the onset of lengthening nights and dreamtime. So in honour of The Lord of Water Nodens Brythonic God of healing and dreams, father of Gwyn ap Nudd Lord of Annwn, I tell this tale as a story through the ages with a mixture of archaeological, historical evidence and my own personal instinctive visions inspired by meditation and journey work. We will then go onto a meditation to meet Nodens and visit the Temple of Healing and Dreams

A story of Nodens God of Healing and Dreams

Sources: roman-britain.co.uk, lydneyparkestateco.uk, Danu Forest book Gwyn ap Nudd pagan Portals, Yuri Leitch book Gwyn God of Annwn expanded edition

Hayley? or if anyone else would like to read? I don't mind reading either way is fine or perhaps volunteers to read a section. Four sections 100 B.C.E., 250 C.E. 364 C.E. Present day

The year is 100 B.C.E. The tribes are gathering within their sacred space, a hillfort built near the banks of a great river we now call the River Severn close to the borders of Wales. The Elder of the tribe crouches down upon the river bank to collect the sacred waters that sustain all life. In return the Elder leaves an offering calling out prayers, chanting to the rhythm of the tides. Through the rising mists he sees a vision it is the catcher upon the shore, the tidal huntsman. With an inner knowing he bows his head in honour of the Lord of the Waters. And so through time the ritual is carried out as did the ancestors before and so will the descendants to come.

The year is 250 C.E. Again the tribes gather within their sacred hillfort. We would say now that it was constructed in the Iron Age. The Elder stands upon the banks of the great river and begins the ritual of the ancestors with prayers and offerings to the great river God. The mists rise up, a disturbance in the water, the wind rushes through the reeds, the Elder knows they are coming. This time the Elder is met with a vision of a Chieftain of Rome. And so the people of Rome settle within the landscape we now know as Lydney Gloucestershire.

The year is 364 C.E. The Roman tribesman is fishing upon the river bank, his vision settles upon the surface of the water and falling into a dreamlike state, he feels a connection with the spirit of place.

He likens it with his own God Neptune God of the Sea. The waters call to him and so their God becomes Nodens in the language of the ancient Romano-British. The Chieftain of Rome calls for a great temple to be built in honour of Nodens, God of fresh water and the sea, of healing and prophetic dreams, honoured as the catcher upon the shores, of hunting and fishing. Nodens honoured as Nudd the God of the great river in the sky we now call the Milky Way.

Present day: The Awenydd sits in stillness within the temple ruins having made a pilgrimage in honour of Nodens. Making offerings of prayers the soft chanting entwining with the whispers of the ancestors before. Echoes of the sacred sound fill the temple site, drifting along the long building and filling the rooms of healing, dreams and visions. The Awenydd with inner knowing feels the response from the spirit of place and offers a dish of sacred water upon the earth. A vision appears, the ancestors have heard the call. The crafter has completed the mosaic floor singing to the dolphins, fisherman, sea gods depicted in the blue tiles. It is inscribed: TO THE GOD NODENS. The Romano-British tribe offer their bronze wolfhound statue a Roman symbol of healing now a symbol of Lydney Park.

The vision has passed, the Awenydd ends the journey and gives thanks:

Nodens God of healing and dreams I hail you

Nodens god of hunting and fishing I hail you

Nodens god of the rivers and seas I hail you

Nodens father of Gwyn ap Nudd I hail you

Meditation on the Meeting Nodens in the Temple of healing and dreams – Hayley

I invite you now to close your eyes and focus on your breath. Breathing in and breathing out feeling a sense of stillness about you and feeling a sense of calm within.

You find yourself upon the shoreline of a great river you notice the flow of the tides as the waters meander and stretch into the distance. A gentle mist starts upon the surface and you sense a presence before you. A messenger from the God of healing and dreams Nodens. You are invited to accompany the messenger to meet with Nodens within his Temple. You may accept or you may politely decline and choose to stay and commune with the healing waters of the great river. You are free to choose.

If you have accepted the invitation, you follow your guide through the vibrant green landscape scattered with stone and earthworks. Eventually you come to a great stone entrance. You make your way through down the steps and find you are standing within a beautiful dreamlike Temple It is an ancient and sacred place of healing. The guide asks you to follow the path to the far end of the Temple. You notice the calming blue colours of the sea creatures within the mosaic floors, and the gentle swirling mists around your feet.

You notice the atmosphere change as you reach the far end of the Temple. Take some time now to notice your surroundings as what you experience here will be personal to you. You sense a calling, It is now time to meet Nodens God of Healing and Dreams. Your guide takes you to one of three chambers where sits Nodens upon his otherworldly chariot. You greet him with great honour and

respect. You may have a question for him or you may just want to listen to any wisdom he may offer. Take some time now to stay a while in his presence.

Maybe 5 or 10 mins silence here?

You here a calling and know that the time has come to make your journey back. You retrace your steps as your guide calls you back through the Temple mists, along the sea blue mosaic floor, up the stone staircase back out into the earthworks upon the river's edge and eventually finding yourself back in the here and now slowly opening your eyes back into this space.

Discussion, Sharing experiences or thoughts – all who wish to do so
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