

FEABHRA - SOLMONATH - SJOFN - SNOW MOON - LIUS
FEBRUARY

by - Maria L. Daggett / Erlan Nordenskol

There are many areas where the Norse and the Celtic traditions mix. The Norse celebration of "**Vala's Vision**" or "**Maiden's Day**" is held on February 2nd. It is very close to the Pagan Celtic Fire Festival of "**Imbolc**" or "**Oimele**", honoring Bridhe/Brigid; and the Christian Irish "**Feast of Saint Brigit**"

The Norse would hang banners adorned with runes around the worship or altar site. On one banner would be Odin's rune in the center. To one side would be Freya's rune, and to the other side would be Thor's rune. A second, larger banner would hang higher and behind Odin's banner or lay draped by the worship site. That banner would have a very large "Lagu" or "**Hulda's Rune**" on it.

The "Dark Lady Hulda" is the deity that symbolizes a woman wise beyond all understanding, she is equally at home in the land of man, the land of the dead, and in the shining realms of the Gods. She is also the sometimes companion of Odin. Hulda is the aspect of the triple Goddess that is the wise woman or crone.

In this festival, tribute is also paid to **FREYA**, her beauty and magic is all encompassing. She is the counterpart to the personifications of "The Fair One" or the Great Goddess. Freya is the sister of **FREYR** and is the protector and patron of the human race.

Vala's Day is a celebration of birth and rebirth. After Freya gives birth she becomes once again, a virgin. This relates to the mother image and the maiden personification of the triple Goddess.

On this day, the gentles will ask Freya to come and let them drink of life and inspiration. There is also mention of Thor and how he becomes purified after slaying the Giants. They ask for clear vision and pure souls, they ask to see and foresee as the Vala was able to foresee the future for Odin. They ask Hulda to consume all their weaknesses for she is old and strong.

As Freya was the daughter of Time, Brigid was the daughter of the Daghdha and also linked with the triple Goddess. Some say that Brigid was able to foresee and prophecies much like Hulda. Like Freya, she was sought out during child birth and both women invoke strong fertility aspects.

One difference between the two is that Brigid herself was a virgin while Freya became a virgin again after giving birth. Odd how a Goddess of fertility was a virgin herself. Freya was able to nurture and feed her people. She was

the care-taker of the mortals. Brigid's cows were said to be able to supply enough milk to fill an ocean. More than enough to feed her people.

Both Pagan festivals have led the way for Christianity to have their festivals. Imbolc - celebrated on Feb 1st - the Celtic Fire Festival between Yule and the vernal equinox - is now Candlemas Eve and the Feast of Saint Brigit. Vala's Day - Feb 2nd - now Candlemas - is the purifying of the Virgin Mary and **Ground Hog's Day**.

There is a medieval - Christian saying that has been modernized. It links the mid winter festival with determining the length of winter.

*If Candlemas Day be fair & bright,
Winter will have another flight;
If on Candlemas Day be shower and rain,
Winter is gone, & will not come again.*

*If the sun shines bright on Candlemas Day,
The half of the winter's not yet away.*

There are a lot of similarities between our two people's beliefs and holidays. The meanings behind the festivals have a common root. How different people choose to celebrate or worship is part of human's ability to reason. In one group there can be many different convictions. As long as the ultimate goals and desires are the same, the individual practices could only enhance a group's charisma.

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