

THE EQUINOX RITUAL:
Practical Applications

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THE FOUR SALUTATIONS

This practice is best done four times a day, at dawn, noon, dusk, and midnight. In the event that one of these times falls within your daily sleep period, the appropriate salutation should be done at the closest convenient time: i.e., just before going to sleep in the case of the midnight salutation, or just after waking up in the case of dawn. Times should be determined according to solar time (in the area of Seattle, about 8 minutes ahead of Pacific standard time) rather than clock time, and corrected for daylight savings between April and October; thus, actual solar noon on the date of this lecture was at 1:08 pm, and actual solar midnight will be at 1:08 am.

The practice in all four cases is the same. Stand facing the direction of the Sun -- East at dawn, South at noon, West at dusk, North at midnight -- and make the opening gesture. If you can see the Sun, good; if not, visualize it in the appropriate position and state. (At dawn, for example, you might imagine it just at the horizon, reddened by morning mists and casting long shadows across the landscape.) Consider the image, sensed or visualized, as an image of the presence of the Divine in Nature. Hold this thought for a time, and then perform the Qabalistic Cross as a symbol of equilibrium. Finally, make the closing gesture to conclude the practice.

THE RITUAL OF THE DESCENDING LIGHT

The following ritual may be performed for the purpose of spiritual development by Companions of the First Degree or higher. Requisites are a cup of water, a stick of incense (frankincense works well) and a holder, and a small table to serve as altar in the center of the working space. The Companion will also have to memorize the invoking pentagrams of the four elements.

As with other rituals based on the Equinox Formula, the goal and result of this ritual is inner balance. It may be performed as often as once a week if desired.

1. Perform the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram.
2. Take up the cup, and say: "And so therefore first that priest who governeth the works of Fire must sprinkle with the lustral water of the loud-resounding Sea." Go to the East, trace a cross with the Cup, and then sprinkle water three times to the East. Do the same in South, West and North. Return to the East, raise the cup, and say, "I purify with Water." Then return cup to altar.
3. Take up the incense, and say: "And when, after all the phantoms are banished, thou shalt see that holy and formless Fire, which darts and flashes through the hidden depths of the universe -- hear thou the voice of Fire." Go to the East, trace a cross with the incense, and wave it thrice toward the East. Do the same in South, West, and North. Return to the East, raise the incense, and say, "I consecrate with Fire." Then return incense to altar.
4. Go by way of North to East, and circumambulate three times, making the Sign of Entering each time you pass the East. When this is done, return to the altar, face East, and say: "Holy art Thou, Lord of the Universe. Holy art Thou, whom nature hath not formed. Holy art thou, the vast and the mighty one, lord of the light and of the darkness." Make the Sign of Entering each time you say "Holy art Thou," and the Sign of Silence at the word "darkness."
5. Pause and say, "I proclaim a working of the Ritual of Descending Light."
6. Pause, and say, "Light: Darkness. East: West. Air: Water." Stamp once on the floor. "I am the reconciler between them. Heat: Cold. South: North. Fire: Earth." Stamp again. "I am the reconciler between them. One Creator: One Preserver: One Destroyer: One Redeemer." Stamp again. "One Reconciler between them."
7. Go to East, and trace the invoking pentagram of Air. Say: "In the Name YHVH (pronounced Yeh-ho-wah), I invoke the powers of Air." Go to South, and trace the invoking pentagram of Fire.

Say: "In the Name ALHIM (pronounced Ell-oh-heem), I invoke the powers of Fire." Go to West, and trace the invoking pentagram of Water. Say: "In the Name AL (pronounce Ell), I invoke the powers of Water." Go to North, and trace the invoking pentagram of Earth. Say: "In the Name ADNI (pronounced Ah-dough-nye), I invoke the powers of Earth."

8. Return to altar, face East, and extend your arms in the form of a cross. Say: "I stand in the place of balanced forces at the center of all things. Let balance within me mirror balance without me: as above, so below." Then: "In the Name AHIH (pronounced Eh-heh-yeh), I invoke the descent of the Light." Visualize a shaft of light descending from far above your head and shining upon you, through you, and on into the depths.

9. Hold this visualization as long and forcefully as possible. When your attention begins to falter, perform the Qabalistic Cross to equilibrate the Light.

10. Repeat the purification with Water and consecration with Fire exactly as in Steps 2-3. Then go by the South to the East, and circumambulate three times counterclockwise, making the Sign of Silence each time you pass the East. Return to the altar, and say, "I now release any spirits who may have been imprisoned by this ceremony. Depart unto your habitations in peace, and peace be between us."

11. Finish by performing the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram.

RITUAL OF CONSECRATION FOR A SCRYING MIRROR

This ritual is presented here largely for illustrative purposes; it may be performed by Companions of the First Degree or higher, but it's recommended that some skill in consecration be developed before it is attempted. Requisites are the same as those of the Ritual of the Descending Light, plus a scrying mirror to consecrate and a silk bag in which the mirror may be placed. (A suitable scrying mirror may be made by painting the convex side of a clock glass with several coats of flat black paint. Obsidian should be avoided in this hemisphere.)

The ritual should be performed nine times, each time on the night of the full moon, in a place where the light of the moon can shine onto the altar at the center of the ritual space during the time of the ritual. An open window or skylight is optimal, as glass blocks some of the denser etheric forces.

At the beginning of the first performance of the ritual, the scrying mirror should be resting on top of the silk bag on the altar. In all subsequent performances, the mirror should be in the bag, so that the banishing rituals do not disrupt the forces already present.

1. Perform the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram, and then the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Hexagram.
2. Take up the cup, and say: "And so therefore first that priest who governeth the works of Fire must sprinkle with the lustral water of the loud-resounding Sea." Go to the East, trace a cross with the Cup, and then sprinkle water three times to the East. Do the same in South, West and North. Return to the East, raise the cup, and say, "I purify with Water." Then return cup to altar.
3. Take up the incense, and say: "And when, after all the phantoms are banished, thou shalt see that holy and formless Fire, which darts and flashes through the hidden depths of the universe -- hear thou the voice of Fire." Go to the East, trace a cross with the incense, and wave it thrice toward the East. Do the same in South, West, and North. Return to the East, raise the incense, and say, "I consecrate with Fire." Then return incense to altar.
4. Go by way of North to East, and circumambulate three times, making the Sign of Entering each time you pass the East. When this is done, return to the altar, face East, and say: "Holy art Thou, Lord of the Universe. Holy art Thou, whom nature hath not formed. Holy art thou, the vast and the mighty one, lord of the light and of the darkness." Make the Sign of Entering each time you say "Holy art Thou," and the Sign of Silence at the word "darkness."

5. Pause and say, "I proclaim a working of a Ritual of Consecration of a scrying mirror." If the mirror is in its bag, take it out at this point; do not touch it with your bare skin. Then perform the Greater Invoking Hexagram Ritual of Luna.

6. Standing at altar, say, "Light: Darkness. East: West. Air: Water." Point at the mirror. "Thou shalt be the reconciler between them. Heat: Cold. South: North. Fire: Earth." Point again. "Thou shalt be the reconciler between them. One Creator: One Preserver: One Destroyer: One Redeemer." Raise arms skyward. "One Reconciler between them."

7. Take up the mirror, being careful only to touch it through the fabric of the bag, and go to East. Trace the Fire form of the invoking hexagram of Luna. Say: "ARARITA! In the Name ShDI AL CHI (pronounced Shah-die ell chye, with the "ch" as in Scots "loch"), I call into thee the visions of Fire." Go to South, and trace the Earth form; repeat the invocation, but replace "Fire" with "Earth." Do the same in the West with the Air form and Air, and in the North with the Water form and Water.

8. Return to the altar, and set the mirror so that the moonlight shines directly on it. Position yourself so that you can see the Moon mirrored in the glass. Trace the Earth form of the invoking hexagram of Luna over the image, say the word "Levanah" nine times slowly, and then say: "Mistress of the night, lady of visions! Behold this scrying mirror, consecrated in the four directions by the power of the four elements. As thy image is reflected in it now, so may a ninth part of thy visionary power be granted to it from this moment on, that it may show me true images of hidden things at my command. In the Name ShDI AL CHI, may it be so!"

9. Carefully, without touching the glass with your skin, wrap the mirror carefully in its bag, so that the energies invoked into it are not discharged by the closing and banishing.

10. Repeat the purification with Water and consecration with Fire exactly as in Steps 2-3. Then go by the South to the East, and circumambulate three times counterclockwise, making the Sign of Silence each time you pass the East. Return to the altar, and say, "I now release any spirits who may unintentionally have been imprisoned by this ceremony. Depart unto your habitations in peace, and peace be between us."

11. Finish by performing the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram.

After the ninth performance of this ritual, the mirror can be used for scrying. It should never be exposed to sunlight or touched directly with bare skin.