

SUNWARDING: ATTUNING TO THE DAILY SOLAR CYCLES

Although it may not be apparent at first, the whole fourfold division of sacred space in Western tradition depends on the cycles of the Sun, our Day Star, around which the Earth ceaselessly revolves. The Wheel of the Year lesson showed how the yearly cycle of the Earth's orbit around the Sun gives rise to the fourfold and eightfold festivals of the year. Then, by creating sacred space and working with the four directions in ritual, we also work with the daily cycle created by the Earth spinning on its own axis which causes the Sun to apparently move through the day through East, South, West, but never illuminating the North in the northern hemisphere.

It is time now to become more finely attuned to the daily cycle in everyday life, for in awareness of this pattern, we begin to really understand that sacred space is not just something that we have to designate to certain places, but is integral to each and every day of our lives. From this grows the realization that the Earth itself is the ultimate sacred space in which we dwell. We can never *not* be within the hallowed bournes of Her temple!

The following attunements are therefore to be performed wherever you happen to be at the four turning points of the daily cycle. If your schedule is really full, doing it once or twice a day, at sunrise or noon, when the Sun's force is strongest, is better than not at all. However, this practice is deceptively simple: performed on a regular basis, it can advance your spiritual growth quite considerably, as you consistently draw the Sun's powerful force into your subtle bodies. For in attuning to the Sun, you are actually affirming the primal forces of Light and Life, which is why the Druids were said to worship the Sun above all else, and also why until recently, people in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland took off their hats in honor of the Sun at sunrise and sunset each day.

Beyond the physical body of the Sun is a spiritual Being of the highest order, sometimes called the Solar Logos, or Intelligence – the directing force behind our solar system. These forces are mediated by the four Archangels, the powers that resonate at the highest octave of the Elemental beings. They correspond to the four directions and elements as shown in the diagram below and should be visualized as towering, radiant figures of light.

Direction	Archangel	Element	Color	Time of Day
East	Raphael	Air	Pale gold	Dawn
South	Michael	Fire	Fiery scarlet	Noon
West	Gabriel	Water	Deep blue	Evening
North	Auriel	Earth	Forest green	Night

1. The attunements are ideally be performed at, or as close as possible, to the times of dawn, midday, sunset and midnight. You can adapt these times to correspond to your own daily schedule, i.e. when you rise, when you have your lunch break, when you finish your work day and before bed. If you are somewhere where you wouldn't feel comfortable performing movements, do all the steps quietly or mentally and without the movements.
2. At these times, turn your eyes in the direction of the Sun and inwardly salute the sun as the visible manifestation of the source of all life. Think of yourself as a part of nature – as standing in your own center in this vast system, and feel your relationship to all the other parts.
3. Raise your arms on each side of your body. The upper arm should be parallel to the floor, bent 90° at the elbow so that the lower arm is upright. Palms face forward. (This is an old Druid sacred sign.)
4. Recite as appropriate the following lines (or invent your own, sticking to the basic pattern.) Visualize clearly the Archangels in glorious, shining raiment of the appropriate color.
5. When you have finished each one, place your hands on your heart and bow your head slightly.

Morning – Face East

Greetings to you, Morning Sun, Bringer of light out of darkness.

Greetings to you, Raphael, Archangel of the East, herald of the dawn, who breathes the breath of Life into the awakening world.

Assist me on the Path of Light as I arise this day, a being of the Divine Radiance from which I have come.

Midday – Face South

Greetings to you, Noonday Sun, Sustainer of warmth and life..

Greetings to you, Michael, Archangel of the South, herald of noontide, who showers the holy fire of Life upon the circling world.

Assist me on the Path of Light as I work this day, a being of the Divine Radiance from which I have come.

Evening – Face West

Greetings to you, Evening Sun, Bringer of the tide of tranquility.

Greetings to you, Gabriel, Archangel of the West, herald of twilight, who pours the cup of Compassion into the quietening world.

Assist me on the Path of Light as I rest this evening, a being of the Divine Radiance from which I have come.

Night – Face North

Greetings to you, Midnight Stars, Bringers of the wisdom of night.

Greetings to you, Auriel, Archangel of the North, herald of night, who brushes the silent world with the touch of Peace.

Assist me on the Path of Light as I sleep tonight, a being of the Divine Radiance from which I have come.