

## RESEARCH ON WELLS

In Hebrew one of the words for a well is *be'er*. The Hebrew the word 'well' carries the meaning of both a 'woman' and '**bride**.'

The Arabic is *bir*. It may be a cistern, natural fountain, a spring, the springs of the sea, a container for collecting rain water or a *well of gathering - bir jam – a special place where people meet*.

It represents a place where there is 'living water.' **Genesis 26:19.**  
 "he drew water out of the well of Bethlehem." **2 Samuel 23: 16.**

### **ain**

The Hebrew word *pege* usually means "running water, a fount or source  
 "doth the fountain send forth from the same opening sweet and bitter water"

**James 3:11.**

*Ayin* is another Hebrew word for well meaning a fountain or spring. **1**

**Sam.29:1.**

It also means the source of the eye.

In the latter context in Hebrew it means *Ma'yan* the valley of weeping 'baca'

**Psalm 84.6.**

There are wells of salvation **Isaiah 12:3.**

The Hebrew word *maqor* describes:

"within thee is the fountain of life" **Psalm 36.9**

"the mouth of the righteous is a fountain, a well of life" **Proverbs 10:11.**

It can also mean a 'bowl,' 'basin,' 'pool,' 'spring' Hebrew *Gullah*.

"give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs and the nether springs." **Josh.5:9**

The 'beloved is described as a spring shut up.' **Song of Songs**

A *be'er* may also be a pit; the vale of Siddim was full of 'slime pits'

**Gen. 14:10.**

It is also the term for the 'pit of destruction' a '*bor*' or *pit* **Psalm 55.23.**

**Genesis 37:20.**

The well-pit of the abyss is the Hebrew word *phear* **Revelation 9:1** (interesting that it is pronounced the same as fear!)

It means the dragon's or jackal's well **Neh. 2:13**

The well/fountain of Babylon was likened to a "corrupted stream" **Proverbs 25:26!**

The well can refer to the deep, '*tehom*' 'the springs' of the sea, the watery abyss;

"hast thou entered into the springs of the sea?" **Job 38:16.**

In Christian symbolism wells fall into the category of life as a pilgrimage and signifies salvation. The well of refreshing and purifying is symbolic of sublime aspirations or of the "silver cord" which attaches man to the function of the centre **Eccles. 12: 6.** Silver is refined seven times **Ps. 12:6.**

*Demeter* the Queen of Heaven in her dark underworld aspect, and other deities were shown standing besides the well as guardians. Her image, as well as the image of her as the 'good' Mother of god with the child on her lap, has been found in excavations at the very bottom of many Celtic wells.



Wells were in all cultures endowed with sacred character, symbolic of the soul and the feminine. This image is found not only in more refined understanding and imagery, but also in that of primitives. They actualize in a kind of epitome the three cosmic orders; heaven, earth and the underworld; the three elements water, earth, and air.

They were considered the life giving channel of communication. They themselves, being the cosmic synthesis. Looked at from bottom to top, a well is like a giant telescope pointed from the bowels of the earth to the celestial pole,, so they were not just seen as terrestrial connecting the celestial.

Wells provided a channel of communication with the realm of the dead, the underworld, the hollow echo the voice of the spirits that arose from the depths, which provided oracular answers. The fleeting shimmer in the water deepened the mystery the reflections provided visions, images and face to face communication with the spirits. Thus medicinal rites, magic, witchcraft, animistic rituals were all done at places of water, but wells were especially sacred because of their character.

The act of drawing water was symbolic of drawing out of the deep from the underworld. The act of throwing items into the well formed acts of sacrifice to the deities below.

Wells were places of secrecy and thus formed a symbol of 'a place of secrets.' Things done or thrown into wells were never seen by others. Thus they were also places of cursing and revenge, dark murder and blood sacrifice. Many wells have been found with the bones of babies and small children at their bottoms.

Because of their nature wells were seen and often are in the natural, connected to other wells, rivers, lakes and the sea, thus formed powerful lines of underground communication in the spirit and in the natural, connecting one place of worship, or sacred site to another, thus carrying immense power.

Hence wells became an image for truth – truth being seen to be found at the bottom of the well, but in their depths there was the silence a mystery. We still use phrases like 'plumbing the depths.'

The Druids understood wells as a places of immense importance, they considered them as sacred wells of knowledge, their silence compared to contemplative wisdom, spiritual development and self-mastery in which speech sinks in and is absorbed into self. They symbolized elitist knowledge.

The well not only external but internal, inside man, formed the sources of supernatural powers and magic. The external forming the internal. Although water is mostly connected to the moon, wells were also the sites of sun worship, ancestral spirits, initiation places, places of annual pilgrimage and intense prayer.

It was a custom to go round a well several times, either three or nine, creeping on the hands knees, but always from east to west, reciting 'paters' (prayers) all the time.

Close by often small piles or mounds of votive stones, especially pure white quartz stones were built, each stone counted for a prayer. At the end the devotee knelt down and bathed his forehead (third eye) in the water and if he required asked for healing and expected to be done. So wells formed a particular place of both spiritual enlightenment, healing a place to contact the spirits and a particularly sacred place of sacrifice.

White Thorn or Ash trees near a well made them particularly sacred, as were other trees The devotee drank the water and tied a strip cut from his garment to the tree.

These strips were never removed, many lasting for years. They acted in the same way as Tibetan prayer flags carrying the prayer to the air, as signs of gratitude, devotion and penitence to a patron saint and were meant to show the devil he could no longer harm the pilgrim. This was one of the origins of drinking 'holy' water. Many paths around wells are deeply embedded as a result of the lines of praying pilgrims.

The Delphic oracle in Greece had it's origin in a 'holy well.'

Wells were accredited with healing powers long before Christianity. Thus the custom of visiting 'holy wells' was grafted onto to Christian belief practices.

Many were named after Saints who were said to have blessed them, but their origin can in fact be traced back to pagan water cults – water spirits! e.g. St. Bridget, St. Columbus, St. Patrick. Many convents were built over or around 'holy wells or waters.'

At St. John's well in County Cork there is a large stone believed to be the true head of John the Baptist! Suspected persons were brought to swear on it and the many 'compacts' made on it were held inviolate, for no one would ever dream of breaking an oath made here. The rock bears the scratches made as indelible signatures of the oaths made at this site.

The grave of the great Irish hero Fionn was laid by a well also in County Cork.

At Tober Kil-na Greina also in Country Cork, the well is called '*the fountain of the sun*' This well is *solar* not lunar. This was said to be the site of an ancient Druid temple and oracle.

The tradition is the a woman called Ba-na-Naomha (the nymph of the well) once lived there and gave the gift of prophecy when she uttered the oracle.

St Patrick apparently cursed the land because of the pagan rites done here and it is said the land was turned into a marsh for a thousand years.

However, it was uncovered and formed the pilgrimage site for thousands who ran here for healing!

Here the Druid ritual the pilgrims participated in was; of drinking three draughts of water, three draughts of drink and then crawling on their knees around the well three times, thus making the ritual circuit 9 times.

After each round the pilgrims laid a stone on the ancient Druid altar in the Druid circle called the "**well of the time sun**" these stones were named in Irish the "**stones of the sun.**"

This ritual was accompanied by much drinking, dancing and gambling. The Ban-Naomha I being said to regenerate in the form of a trout!

Nymph means both a water spirit and a "*bride.*" (remember the info on the San.)

Other wells gained repute as where once they were wells of evil repute, when blessed by a saint, they became wells of blessing and places where evil spirits could be driven away. In all probability many of these shrines were originally shrines of local deities (water spirits).

A spring of bubbling water meant there was life and where there was life it was believed there was a spirit!

Healing wells were connected to 'holy times of the year' both Christian and pagan, to the star, moon and the cycles of the moon. Thus connected to fertility rites an in particular women's fertility through the cycles of menstruation. Though wells were mainly lunar yet they could be also 'solar.'

Superstitious rites through the offering of gifts, silver and gold especially coins were thrown into wells connecting them to the whole occult financial system and false prosperity.

Pieces of cloth were left along side wells. These were called 'clootie wells' for the pieces of cloth' clooties' that adorned the vegetation around them.

Bargains were made at wells. It was a practice to make a bargain over running water in a process called "*calling the waters.*" Lovers plighted troths at wells standing on either side and dipping their fingers in the water, or simple licked their thumbs and pressed them together with the words "'here's my vow, I'll ne'er beguile thee."

Farmers to this day often spit in their hands before shaking hands over a bargain not understanding the origin.

"Dooking for apples" a Druidical rite was associated with waters and wells, a ritual connected with Halloween.

Wells were also places of witch trials where water was used as a witness.  
Trial by ordeal of water.

Holy wells could lose their power if a murder had been committed at it or nearby, thus becoming cursed.

In the Zohar a well is fed by a stream that symbolizes the marriage between a man and a woman. In Hebrew the word well carries both the meaning of a woman and a bride.

In Ireland the queen of heaven was *Bridget* or *St. Bridget* and she was called '**bride.**'

A *bridewell* was a term for a gaol/jail, or place of correction named after the actual gaol called St. Bride's Well, near London. In Ireland to this day her perpetual flame still burns tended by her priestesses nuns.

Thus it became a term for severe corrective discipline –often handed out by nuns to girls who had 'gone astray,' particularly in Ireland

Interestingly a bride is also a term for a delicate network connecting the patterns in lace, a bonnet-string or cord! (link to **Eccles. 12: 6**) Could this be the imagery behind the connecting of waters?

There is an actual Bride's Well in Ireland. It is called Tober Breda (The holy well of St Bridget) There is a stone oratory here of antiquity, with a doorway fashioned after an Egyptian model, sloping towards the top.

There also is and ancient White Thorn tree on whose branches women hung locks of their hair, a symbol of self sacrifice to the goddess.(just as other women did to Venus) These were the thorn trees the 'fairies or wee folk' could be seen dancing around.

*St. Bridget was the pagan goddess Brighita. She was called the "serpent or loathly Bride," the **Serpent Queen**, said to emerge from her hole in February, just as Persephone the dark goddess emerged from the underground.*

Her connection to the serpent/dragon connects her to the ley system which is thought of as the power of the land. (water?) She is also called the '*two faced one*' linking her to the whole double headed eagle research. This reflects her dual character as the maid of summer and the hag of winter.

She is said to be the tutelary goddess of the Brigantes akin to the Roman Minerva. At Aqua Sulis (Bath England) her perpetual flame was kept burning, as it is for St Bridget in Ireland to this day. The founder of Bath, Bladdud, first lit the sacred fire to her. Minerva merged with Bridget to become Sul/Sulis.or Sulis Minerva.

The Goddess Sul who presides over the hot springs, the curative waters, the healing waters; for Sul is the very heat that causes the waters to become hot.

She is the “fired up forge, far below the earth, the energy used to heat the waters but also regulate their flow.” She is also seen as the warmth of the sun that breaks the hold of winter.. She is a combined water /fire spirit, with both solar and lunar aspects, the very essence of the Baba Jaga the Crone!

The prison the Bridewell near London was dedicated to her. Her head carved in stone was held in high esteem and at the oncoming of Christianity was hidden for safety. It was later recovered and installed in the church of St. Bride of Knockbridge.

In 1847, the head was moved and is believed to have been cast into a peat pit by a vicar! ***The actual head of Saint Bride however, was believed to have been taken to the Holy Land, though it is now said to be enshrined in Lumiar, near Lisbon, Portugal, in the church of St. John the Baptist. Here her feast is annually celebrated.***

Another name of St. Bride is ***St. Ffraid***. (again the connection with fear.)

Legend states she plucked her own eyes out in order to make herself unattractive to her suitors, but once this was achieved she promptly popped them back into their sockets again So She is connected with the power to blind but in her healing capacity has the power to heal the blind!

Her cloak is said to ‘cover’ wherever it falls. At one time it was said to nearly cover all of Ireland. This cloak supposedly went to Bruges Cathedral in 1087. and apparently is still there.  
Bride’s shoe is said to be in Dublin National Museum.

Her bag, rosary and bell are said to be in Glastonbury. Here she was supposed to have spent the last years of her life in a little isle called Beckery or ‘*Little Ireland*’ where there was a holy spring. This was later rebuilt and dedicated to Mary Magdalene!!!

Under the Chapel San Ffraid, the bodies of 6 people were found in 1887/8 6, all with their heads to the West. The fields around Chapel are all called ‘brides.’

The legend is that Bride was taken to Bethlehem and became the midwife to Mary and the wet-nurse to Jesus. She is also the ‘foster-mother’ of Jesus. This echoes the ‘son of light’ of the Druids who had three drops of wisdom placed on his brow.

These three drops became the three drops which are the source of the three rays of light which form the – the Awen- the Druid symbol.( I believe that this is a symbol of Kundalini.)

***St. Bridgit is ; Mary of the Gael. Her origins in legend go back to the Goddess Dana the greatest of the Danann goddesses ( the tribe of Dan whose symbol is the double headed eagle!) Dana was called Brid "the poetess."***

***She was associated with waters and gave her name to rivers all over Ireland, Wales and England. Her name was an epithet and meant "Exalted One."***

***She is also a triple goddess. She was the inspiration behind the Druid filidh-poets. She founded the first convent in Ireland at St. Maccaille's church on Croghan Hill, Co. Westmeath where large numbers of 'noble' ladies entered as postulants, thus founding the whole 'nun' movement.***

***The cross of St. Bride was actually a symbol of sun worship, representing the sun in the centre and the rays of light from it forming the arms of the cross – this is what is behind the Celtic Cross.***

The "fires of Bride" are a perpetual flame burnt in her honour at Kildare, which means the cell of or church of oak. This flame burnt without ash and was a 'great wonder' probably fuelled by peat.

The flame was put out in 1220 and when relit was fed by oak wood, the sacred tree of the Druids. The flame was finally extinguished following Henry VIII's Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536-40.

However her fire never really went out, it just burned underground. The 'fire of Bride' is only ever tended by women, her nun/priestesses who do so for 19 consecutive days and on the 20<sup>th</sup> day St. Bride comes to tend it herself.. Now the exact spot is marked by one of Ireland's round towers and stands in the grounds of St. Bridgid's Cathedral, County Kildare. The actual site of the cathedral was originally the pagan site dedicated to the pagan goddess Bridgid!

Kildare is one of the oldest towns in Ireland was probably a sacred place for the Druids for they celebrated the sun and moon in sacred oak groves. The Oak was venerated as it held the '**spirit of Esus**' or **Hesus**, who eventually became mingled with Jesus. **Hesus is referred to as Hu-Hesus or Jesus.** Hu the 'essential seed' is *reborn* at the winter solstice.

This is the wood that feeds the sacred fire of the "**serpent queen.**" In Lithuania the serpent queen is called **EGLE** (so close to Eagle) called **Queen of Grass snakes**. These are snakes that inhabit the sea,- snakes, both fresh and saline – *water snakes*. She became the '**Bride of the Serpent.**'

Could the double headed eagle be in fact the false bride the bride of the serpent?

There is so much more but hope this helps for now. Ireland is a major European stronghold.