

NORSE CREATION MYTH

Before the dawn of time and before the world was created, there was a place called Niflheim. Niflheim was the darkest and coldest region, and consisted of ice, frost and fog. Niflheim was and still is, in the northern region of Ginnungagap.

To the south of Ginnungagap there is a place called Muspelheim, it is the land of fire. In Muspelheim there is a giant named Surt, he is the ruler of the land. Muspelheim is the home of the fire demons and fire giants.

Between Niflheim and Muspelheim there was a great void, this vast emptiness was called Ginnungagap. It is said that in Niflheim at a place called Hvergelmir, is where all the cold rivers are from, and it is said to be the source of the eleven rivers. Hvergelmir was the origin of all existence and the place where every living thing will go back. Elivagar "ice waves" are the rivers which existed in Niflheim at the beginning of the world. They were the streams floating out of Hvergelmir. The water from Elivagar was flowing down the mountains to the plains of Ginnungagap, where it solidified to frost and ice, which gradually formed a very dense layer. That is the reason, why there is very cold in the northern plains

From the south where Muspelheim is, came lava and sparks into the great void Ginnungagap. In the middle of Ginnungagap the air from Niflheim and Muspelheim met, the fire melted the ice and it began to drip, and there grew therefrom a humanoid creature. It was a Jotun who we today call Ymir. While Ymir slept, and the sweat under his arms grew two more giants, one male and one female, and one of his legs paired with the other to create a third, a son Thrudgelmir "Strength Yeller" These were the first of the family of frost giants also called jotuns. They were fed by the cow giant Audhumla who, like Ymir, was created from the melting ice in Ginnungagap.

Audhumla herself fed on a block of salty ice, and while she was licking the the rock something strange happened. On the first day some human hair emerged from the rock. The second day Audhumla licked the rock; a head grew from the stone. At last on the third day the rest of the body came out. The man who had grown out of the salty rock was Buri, the first of the gods. Buri was a giant, big and handsome. He had a son called Borr, and he got married to Bestla, a Jotun woman. Borr and Bestla had three sons, Odin, Vili and Ve.

Odin and his two brothers were bothered by the fact that the Jotuns outnumbered the Aesir. The giant troll was constantly conceiving new Jotuns. The only solution they could see was to kill Ymir. The three brothers waited until Ymir was asleep before they assaulted him. A terrifying battle began. Using all their strength, they managed to kill Ymir. The blood spouted out with furious force in every direction. Most of the Jotuns drowned in the flood of blood. Only two Jotuns survived, Bergelmir and his wife. The couple found asylum in the land of mist. All future Jotuns descended from this couple.

The Creation of the World

The World was Created from the remains of the giant Ymir. The three brothers dragged the dead body of Ymir towards the center of Ginnungagap. This is the place where they created the world from the remains of Ymir. The blood was transformed into oceans and water. The flesh became the land. The bones became the mountains. The teeth made into rocks. The hair became the grass and trees. The eyelashes became Midgard. They threw the brain up in the air and it became the clouds. The skull became the sky. It was the lid that covered the new world. The brothers grabbed some of the sparks shooting out from Muspelheim, the land of fire. They threw the sparks up toward the inside of the skull. These sparks gleamed at night and are what we call the stars. On the plains of Idavoll, they built Asgard, which would be the home of the gods. The Jotuns were allowed to live, but only very far away from Asgard.

While Odin and his brothers were in the progress of creating a new world from the body parts of Ymir, worms kept crawling out of the remains. The worms became dwarfs. The brothers told four of the dwarfs to hold up the sky. They did not want to risk the sky falling down. The names of the four dwarfs are North "Nordi" West "Vestri", South "Sundri", and East "Austri", and were sent out in each direction of the world.

The other dwarfs made their homes in rocks and caves under the ground, which is called Nidavellir. The dwarfs became experts in craftsmanship, and have created some of the most powerful weapons, like Mjölnir, Thor's hammer.

The Sun and Moon – Day and Night

A man by the name Mundilfari from Midgard had two children, so shiny and beautiful that he decided to call his son Mani, and his daughter Sol.

The gods were furious by this arrogance, and took both of them and put them up in the sky. Sun(Sol) is pulled over the sky by two horses Arvakr "very strong" and Alsvin "very quick." A shield "Svalin," in Sol's chariot protected Sol from the sun. Mani is pulled by one horse Aldsvider Mani stole two children from Midgard, to help him drive his chariot, their names are Bil and Yuki.

A Jotun had a daughter Nat "Night." The daughter Night had a son Dag "Day." Night and Day got a horse and a chariot, and was put in the sky, to drive night and day around the earth. Night is driving pulled by her horse Hrimfaxi. And behind her is Day, pulled by his horse "Skinfaxi." They are pursued by two other children from a Jotun, Sköll "Treachery" and Hati Hróðvitnisson "He Who Hates, Enemy." Each month, it is said, Hati takes a bite out of the Moon and tries to gobble it up. But the Moon gets away and grows whole again. These two wolves will catch the sun and the moon, at Ragnarök.

Ask and Embla

One day Odin, Vili and Ve walked on the beach. There they found two logs; one appeared to be from the Ash tree and the other appeared to come from an Elm tree. Odin gave the logs spirit and life, Ve gave them movement, mind and intelligence and Vili gave them shape, speech, feelings and the five senses. The first two humans had been created. The man was given the name Ask, and the woman was given the name Embla. The Aesir decided the humans should live in the place named Midgard.