



# Viking Mythology: Thor, Odin, Loki and the Old Norse Myths

*Mikael Shainkman*

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## **Viking Mythology: Thor, Odin, Loki and the Old Norse Myths** Mikael Shainkman

Stories of the hammer-wielding Thor, wise Odin, beautiful goddess Freya and evil Loki have fascinated people throughout the ages. Even today, almost a thousand years after the last Scandinavians abandoned the old gods for Christianity, the Viking myths continue to captivate new generations of readers. Scandinavian artists have been inspired by these myths for hundreds of years. Art museums all over Scandinavia display paintings with scenes from Norse mythology, and authors and painters still draw on the language and content of the old myths. Also artists elsewhere in the world are inspired by the Norse myths. Richard Wagner borrowed heavily from Viking lore when he wrote his operas, and it's hard to imagine the fantasy worlds of J. R. R. Tolkien and George R. R. Martin without the inspiration from Scandinavian mythology.

This book offers the modern reader a gateway into the wondrous world of Norse mythology with all its gods, goddesses, heroes, giants, elves, dwarfs and other creatures. But at the same time, this is more than just a collection of the ancient myths. This book also places all these gods and myths in their historical context and explains the religion of the Vikings, with its sacred calendar, its holy places and its sacrifices.

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