



# HAMMER OF THOR

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*Then he [Loki] gave the hammer to Thor, and said that Thor might smite as hard as he desired, whatsoever might be before him, and the hammer would not fail; and if he threw it at anything, it would never miss, and never fly so far as not to return to his hand; and if he desired, he might keep it in his sark [vest], it was so small; but indeed it was a flaw in the hammer that the fore-haft was somewhat short.*

**Sturluson (2006) pg. 147**

## WELCOME

Welcome to the Hammer of Thor mini module, a short self-study course designed to give you a thorough grounding in the myth and history of *Mjolnir* (the Hammer of Thor) and practical experience of using the Hammer as a means of blessing and protecting yourself and your working space. The Hammer Rite will provide you with a means to create a safe and sacred space around yourself for energy work, meditation, magickal work or simply to protect your home or personal space. The module is made up of the following sections:

- The history, myth and symbolism of Thor's Hammer
- A guided meditation to establish a personal connection with the Hammer of Thor
- The history and uses of the Hammer Rite
- Instructions for performing the basic Hammer Rite
- A discussion of, and instructions for performing the full Hammer Rite
- Instructions for performing a simplified Hammer Rite
- A brief guide to adapting the Hammer Rite for working in the Anglo-Saxon tradition

As this is a self-study module you can, of course, complete it in your own time, and do as many, or as few of the exercises as you like. I would strongly recommend that you read all of the first section and undertake the guided meditation before you move on to the Hammer Rite. As you will see, I have included three variations of the Hammer Rite – if you only want to use one I would use the basic Hammer Rite.

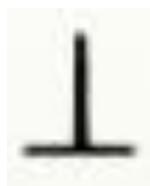
You will also notice that the full Hammer Rite contains a great deal of discussion material. In many ways, this rite is included as it is important for you to understand where the Hammer Rite comes from rather than because I would recommend its regular practice. You will find the original rite plus some additional variations in *The Nine Doors of Midgard*, written by the creator of the rite Edred Thorsson. The full rite is not commonly used as it is quite lengthy and combines a large number of elements – many of which have been culled from other traditions and not always referenced as well as they might have been. I would recommend that you work with the basic Hammer Rite regularly before attempting the full Rite – your work will be greatly enhanced by a thorough grounding in the core part of the rite.

I do hope you enjoy the module. I would, of course, love to hear about your experiences and receive any feedback (positive or negative!) to help me improve on this, and other, courses.

Magin Rose  
**StarFire Alchemy**



## HISTORY, MYTH AND SYMBOLISM



In a very broad sense, the Hammer of Thor is itself a ‘rune’ - a glyph (symbol) with hidden meanings attached to it (see the glyph to the left). When we work with the Hammer of Thor we draw on its inherent power: the power of the dwarves who created it; Loki who commissioned it; Thor who wields it; the stories of great deeds achieved with it; and the reverence, joy and power it has inspired within those who have worn and wielded it before us.

### MJOLNIR

The word *Mjölnir* is Old Norse and means ‘crusher’. It has been connected to families of words in Icelandic, Russian, Latin, Welsh, Swedish and English referring to lightning, crushing, grinding and milling. The modern English version of the word is Mjolnir (pronounced m’jol-near) – we don’t know of an Old English variant. You can see from the shapes of the pendants in Figure 1 and 2 that sometimes the Hammer was shaped like an upside down T, while at other times it had a larger section at the base of the handle as well (the most extreme shapes looking a little bit like an anchor with a second cross bar at the top of the vertical axis). Many of the pendants you will see today have a stylized head on the top (thought to be Thor) – mimicking the distinctly head-like shape on the top of some old pendants (like Figure 1).



FIGURE 1

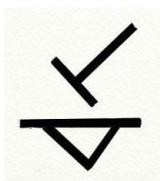
Figure 1 shows a gold-plated silver Mjolnir pendant found at Bredsättra on Öland, Sweden (the original is housed at the Swedish Museum of National Antiquities), while Figure 2 shows a silver Hammer pendant found in Fitjar, Hordaland, Norway (drawings both done in the 1800s). We know that the symbol of the Hammer was both important and prevalent across Northern Europe (including England where, for example, an iron hammer was found in Yorkshire). The symbol was commonly worn as a talismanic pendant and many finds have the hammer with a link or ring attached. It has also been noted that many of the Hammers found were in areas which were highly Christianized, leading us to believe that wearing the Hammer was a response to Christians wearing the cross.

Mjolnir was presented to the thunder God Thor by the wild-fire God Loki. These two Gods are essential to the Norse pantheon as go-betweens for Odin’s ‘Aesir’ (forces of ‘order’), and the forces of ‘chaos’ (e.g. giants, trolls, dark elves and elemental beings who we might liken to the Titans of Greek mythology). While Zeus and his Olympian family have occasional spats with the Titans, the Aesir lead a much more precarious existence and are constantly threatened by destruction at the hands of their chaotic enemies and relatives.



FIGURE 2

Mjolnir is deeply connected to the rune  $\text{Þ}$  (Thurisaz) which is both Thor’s rune and the rune of chaos (a ‘Thur’ being a particular type of giant). The energy of  $\text{Þ}$  can be deeply destructive and is approached with caution by most rune practitioners; conversely, it is also the ultimate rune of protection and a circle of  $\text{Þ}$  runes will keep pretty much anything out. The Hammer has the same potential as  $\text{Þ}$  because it can be used to destroy (indeed,  $\text{Þ}$  is sometimes interpreted as being the Hammer), but the Hammer can also bring order – it can use the power of  $\text{Þ}$  against itself.



Interestingly  $\text{Þ}$  is sometimes taken to signify wildfire, the force of Loki who gave Thor the Hammer in the first place (despite his own intimate connection with the forces of chaos).  $\text{Þ}$  is also sometimes likened to an anvil; note how the shapes of  $\text{Þ}$  and  $\text{⚔}$  can come together to signify the act of smithing – a highly skilled form of creation (often associated with magick). Thor is also a God of thunder and Mjolnir is said to be able to produce lightning.

## MYTHS

Loki did not give Thor Mjolnir out of the goodness of his heart but rather as a peace offering after he had cut off the hair of Thor's wife:

*Then he [Loki] gave the hammer to Thor, and said that Thor might smite as hard as he desired, whatsoever might be before him, and the hammer would not fail; and if he threw it at anything, it would never miss, and never fly so far as not to return to his hand; and if he desired, he might keep it in his sark [vest], it was so small; but indeed it was a flaw in the hammer that the fore-haft was somewhat short.*

**Sturluson (2006) pg. 147**



FIGURE 3

Figure 3 is *Thor's battle with the Ettins* (1872), by Mårten Eskil Winge. Thor is often depicted as being a bit more butch and beardy than this, but I don't think this depiction would displease him... The Eddas are full of stories about Thor using Mjolnir to frighten, maim and kill giants – with Mjolnir in his hand Thor is the guardian of order par excellence. Just as the power of Thurisaz is turned against it in the form of Mjolnir, so the power of the giants is turned inwards in the form of Thor and Loki – both of whom are directly descended from giants. In *Loki's Quarrel* in the Poetic Edda Thor repeatedly threatens to turn the power of Mjolnir against his treacherous brother, although eventually Loki is caught and subjected to torture instead:

*Be silent you evil creature, my mighty hammer  
Miollnir shall deprive you of speech;  
The rock on your shoulders [Loki's head] I shall strike from your neck,  
And then your life will be gone...  
Be silent you evil creature, my mighty hammer  
Miollnir shall deprive you of speech;  
I shall throw you up on the roads to the east [home of giants],  
Afterwards no one will see you...  
Be silent you evil creature, my mighty hammer  
Miollnir shall deprive you of speech;  
With my right hand I'll strike you, with Hrungrnir's killer,  
So that every one of your bones is broken...  
Be silent you evil creature, my mighty hammer  
Miollnir shall deprive you of speech;  
The slayer of Hrungrnir will send you to hell,  
Down below the corpse gates.*

**Larrington, (1996), pg. 94-95**

As well as the many tales of Thor bashing giants over the head with his hammer, there is also an interesting incident where Thor provides his goats as part of a feast and then brings them back to life by blessing the hydes and bones with Mjolnir – but not before one ill-advised guest has broken one of the bones:

*Thor tarried there overnight; and in the interval before day he rose up and clothed himself, took the hammer Mjöllnir, swung it up, and hallowed the goat-hides; straightway the he-goats rose up, and then one of them was lame in a hind leg. Thor discovered this, and declared that the husbandman or his household could not have dealt wisely with the bones of the goat: he knew that the thigh bone was broken. There is no need to make a long story of it; all may know how frightened the husbandman must have been when he saw how Thor let his brows sink down before his eyes; but when he looked at the eyes, then it seemed to him that he must fall down before their glances alone. Thor clenched his hands on the hammer-shaft so that the knuckles whitened; and the husbandman*

*and all his household did what was to be expected: they cried out lustily, prayed for peace, offered in recompense all that they had. But when he saw their terror, then the fury departed from him, and he became appeased, and took of them in atonement their children, Thjálfi and Röskva, who then became his bond-servants; and they follow him ever since.*

**Sturluson (2006) pg. 57-58**

Animals that miraculously come to life so the Gods may feast are fairly common occurrences in the Eddas, what is interesting is that Mjolnir is used to perform the deed (suggesting a life-giving aspect). It is also worth noting that it is while clutching the Hammer that Thor calms himself – the judgment he decides upon of taking the children is actually a great honour to the family, not to mention the eternal life that also seems to be conferred.

There are other examples of the Hammer being used in a more ‘creative’ way. In the *Prose Edda* Thor blesses the funeral pyre of Nanna, the widow of Thor’s brother who died of grief upon the death of her husband (Sturluson, 2006, pg. 73) and, on a separate occasion, the giant Thrym attempts to bless his impending marriage by placing Mjolnir upon his bride’s lap – little suspecting that ‘she’ is in fact Thor in disguise, waiting to bash the living daylights out of Thrym once he gets his hands on his hammer again (Hollander, 1962, pg. 109). These tales suggest that Mjolnir can be used to ensure the safe passage of souls between the realms of the living and the dead, promote fertility (note the placing of the Hammer over the bride’s womb), and to bless oaths of marriage. These uses have been adopted into the modern Germanic religions such as Heathenry and Asatru.

Thor and his Hammer also have a special relationship with Midgard (Middle Earth – the home of man); Thor’s mother is Fjorgyn (Earth) and he is known as ‘Midgard’s Warder’; Thor and Mjolnir are therefore particularly appropriate to call upon for protection by us mortals.

When you perform the Hammer Rite you will notice that it uses the four directions (as well as above and below). Although Thorsson may have been relying on the structure of the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram (discussed below), he may also have had the four dwarves Northri, Suthri, Austri and Vestri (North, South, East and West) in mind – Thor’s Hammer was forged by dwarves and, as such, it is through their magicks that the Gods are able to ward off the forces of chaos.

#### MODERN RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM

Following on from the use of the Mjolnir symbol by the Germanic peoples to testify to their devotion to Thor, modern Heathens and Asatru also use the sign for protection, blessing and strength, indeed, the Hammer of Thor has become the symbol of Germanic neopaganism. The Hammer is used to protect and bless space (as we will be using it), to consecrate objects and food (by tracing the sign of the Hammer over the item) and as part of rituals celebrating rites of passage and oaths taken. In *Teutonic Magick* Gundarsson says that:

*The hammer is really more religious than magical in nature; however, inscriptions exist in which Thorr is called upon “to hallow the runes”. Magickally, it is used to drive out wights [creatures such as giants and trolls] and forces which are detrimental to the working and to fill the place or thing in question with holy might.*

**Gundarsson (2007) pg. 208**

Whether you are working with the Hammer of Thor as a religious symbol or not, it is important to recognize that it is considered a holy symbol and should be respected as such. It is also a sad fact that, as with the runes, the powerful symbolism of the Hammer has been appropriated for use by those with extremist and racist views – unfortunately this is a hazard that most powerful symbols are exposed to and we will give it no further credence by dwelling upon it.

#### EXPLORATORY SYMBOLISM

In *Galdrbok* (2000, pg. 258), Johnson and Wallis put forward a suggestion that when Thor’s hammer is placed upside down (i.e. as it looks in the sigil ⊥), it also represents the scales of justice – a symbol

of the God Tyr whose rune is  $\uparrow$ . Johnson and Wallis synthesize Odin, Tyr and Thor into a triple 'All Father' or 'Sky Father' who can simultaneously embody: the lightning that flashes between heaven and earth; the world tree; the axis around which the universe revolves; the scales of justice; and all aspects of order and authority.

The word 'Galdrbok' was used by Edred Thorsson to describe a rune practitioner's personal record (Thorsson, 1991), and, taken in this context, *Galdrbok* provides a really interesting example of the way in which two rune practitioners have internalized the runes and created a powerful system of their own. As rune practitioners we can look at the associations or 'kenning's' Johnson and Wallis propose and decide whether they work for us or not – they certainly provide some powerful symbolism which we can work into our understanding of the power of Thor's Hammer.

Modern practitioners have also worked on a system of 'hvels' (wheels) based upon the Eastern chakra system; the rune Thurisaz (which we already know is deeply connected with the Hammer) is placed at the heart chakra. While there is, rightly, skepticism about any direct translation between systems, I have had confirmations from students new to the runes, but highly experienced in Eastern forms of energy work, that the energy of the Hammer flows through the heart chakra.

## HAMMER MEDITATION

As a RuneCrafter I believe that the power of the runes, and symbols such as the Hammer of Thor stem from a fusion between the past history of the symbol (in this case the objects, myths, and uses of the Hammer of Thor) and the present creation of that symbol by the individual practitioner in their ritual space. The Ancient Greeks developed the concept of the microcosm and macrocosm, a model which is used by many magickal practitioners today and is useful to us as a means of understanding what is happening when we draw and empower a symbol which has been used many times before.

The concepts of the microcosm and macrocosm work on the assumption that there are universal patterns which govern both the universe and the tiniest individual piece of it (in the Germanic tradition these universal patterns are called  $\text{\O}rl\text{\o}g$  meaning 'primal law'). The ancient Greeks saw man as the mid-point of the Cosmos (note that the Germanic tradition calls the realm of Man 'Middle Earth'), and subscribed to the maxim 'As above, so below' – meaning that what happens at the level of the Macrocosm is mirrored at the level of the Microcosm, and vice versa. When you call upon the Hammer of Thor, you are not just calling upon the pre-existing concept of Mj\olnir (the 'macrocosm'), you are creating Mj\olnir within yourself (as a microcosm) which simultaneously connects you to the power of 'universal Mj\olnir'.

We do this by discovering the power of the Hammer within ourselves, in a sense we find our own 'personal Hammer'. Your Hammer will be subtly different to the Hammer of every other RuneCrafter, but they will all connect to the Macrocosm and, because of 'as above, so below', your work with your personal Hammer will also resonate within the universal symbol of the Hammer of Thor, changing it forever.

You will have received a sound file called 'Personal Hammer' which is a guided meditation that will take you on a short inner journey to find your own personal hammer. Before you start, make sure that you are familiar with the material in the History, Myth and Symbolism section and scan the key words below which are all important to the Hammer of Thor.

|           |            |              |
|-----------|------------|--------------|
| Thunder   | Balance    | Creation     |
| Lightning | Blessing   | Destruction  |
| Order     | Fertility  | Life         |
| Chaos     | Protection | Regeneration |
| Power     | Strength   | Cleansing    |

Make sure that you are in a quiet and comfortable space where you will not be disturbed when you do the meditation. During the meditation I will ask you to join in singing 'Mjolnir' [m'yol-near] three times – this is important because you are calling the Hammer to you.



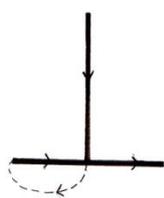
The Hammer of Thor symbol itself looks like an upside down T, with the head of the hammer resting upon the ground and the handle rising up. The hammer head is of equal length on each side (unlike a carpenter's hammer).

When you have finished the meditation make a record of what your Hammer looked like (remember that whatever you see will be the right thing for you, so don't worry about whether it is 'right' or not). Whenever you draw the Hammer sigil in the future, you will be able to connect to the power of Mjolnir by visualizing your Hammer and drawing energy from it. If you feel that your connection is dwindling (e.g. if you haven't worked with the symbol for a long time), you can repeat the meditation to re-connect.

## THE HAMMER RITE

Now that you have connected with the energy of the Hammer, you will be able to use it whenever you need to. As you know from the section on the history of Mjolnir, it is likely that people used the symbol in much the same way as the Gods are described as using it in the Eddas – to protect and bless objects, spaces and rites of passage. Apart from actually wearing the Hammer, the most popular way of using the sign of the Hammer today is as part of a 'Hammer Rite' for blessing and consecrating a space and its occupants.

Edred Thorsson created the modern Hammer Rite as part of a more complex working owing much to the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram (LBRP) used in ceremonial magick (Thorsson, 1991). We will be starting by working with the basic Hammer Rite which is the most commonly used rite and very effective for space clearing or blessing a permanent temple.



HAMMER OF THOR  
SIGIL

### THE BASIC HAMMER RITE

The Hammer Rite can be used as a method of blessing a permanent sacred space, as a stand-alone space warding, or as part of a more complex circle building.

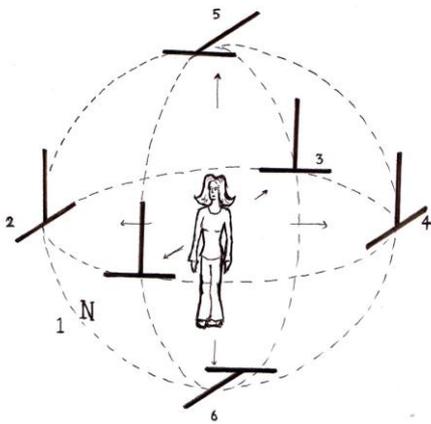
In all of the three Hammer Rites you will learn, the Hammer of Thor is drawn by starting at the top and drawing the vertical axis, moving your hand to the left in a loop (symbolized by the dotted line in the diagram to the left) and then drawing the horizontal axis (the head) of the hammer from left to right. If you are left handed, however, you may find it easier to draw the base from right to left.<sup>1</sup>

Draw your hammer using your index and middle fingers, holding your ring and little finger down with your thumb (as an alternative you can use a rune wand, sacred knife or hammer to draw your symbols).

As I have mentioned, the Hammer Rite was loosely based around the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram – but with significant differences. One of these is that the ritual starts with the practitioner facing North (whereas the LBRP has the practitioner facing East). The East is considered the home of the giants (forces of Chaos) so is probably not the best place to start, the North is associated with magickal power, the manifestation of form, and the realm of the ancestors. You will also see that Thorsson's full rite includes the calling in of the rune circle which also starts in the North.

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<sup>1</sup> In the Lesser Banishing ritual the horizontal axis is drawn from right to left because of the orientation of the Qabbalistic Tree of Life upon the body – as this is not important for the Hammer Rite, I assume the left-to-right preference is purely because it is more comfortable for a right handed person (but Thorsson doesn't expand on this)



Once you have completed your ritual, your space will look like the diagram on the left, with six brilliant blue hammers poised around your space.

In my diagram, the circumference of the circle is at the same level as the heart of the practitioner (with the base of each of the quarter hammers resting upon the circumference). Make sure that your hammers are far enough apart so that all of the space you wish to work in falls between them.

1. Just as you would do with any other space protection, you need to ensure you are not drawing on your own energy during the casting of the Hammers. Envisage the energy of your own Hammer resting within your heart and feel it drawing energy from the Earth below and the sky above into you. When you draw the Hammers, see energy flowing from your heart down your arm and out of your fingers into the Hammer.
2. Face the North. With your dominant hand draw  $\perp$  in front of you. Envisage it blazing with a blue-white light, like a lightning bolt. On the down stroke say 'Hammer in the North' and on the cross stroke say 'Hallow and hold this holy stead' (literally 'Bless and hold safe this holy place'). When you have drawn the Hammer see it move outwards to the edge of the space you want to protect.
3. Turn to the East and following the same procedure say 'Hammer in the East, hallow and hold this holy stead'.
4. Turn to the South and following the same procedure say 'Hammer in the South, hallow and hold this holy stead'.
5. Turn to the West and following the same procedure say 'Hammer in the West, hallow and hold this holy stead'.
6. Return to face the North and then look upwards. Draw a Hammer of Thor above your head saying 'Hammer above me, hallow and hold this holy stead'.
7. Look downwards and draw a Hammer of Thor beneath you saying 'Hammer beneath me, hallow and hold this holy stead'.
8. At the end of the rite, take a moment to see your hammers blazing with blue light, their energies touching each other so that a beautiful blue sphere of light encircles your space.

Some people draw their Hammers in red (the traditional colour for runes) and then visualize a blue sphere forming around the space. Try out both techniques and see which one works best for you.

If you are blessing a permanent space then it is not normally considered necessary for you to remove the Hammers at the end (although a thank you is always nice so you could simply bow to each of the Hammers in turn). You will still need to re-cast the Hammers regularly around your space as they won't hang around forever.

If you are constructing a temporary space (or you prefer your permanent space to be completely clear after your work) then you can do the following:

1. Facing North, bow to the Hammer below you saying 'I give thanks to the Hammer below me'. Visualise the blue energy of the Hammer dissipating, sinking down into the Earth and out into the space around you, conferring blessings as it departs and leaving your space balanced and cleansed.
2. Look upwards and bow to the Hammer above saying 'I give thanks to the Hammer above me'. Again, visualize the energy dissipating, conferring blessings as it departs and leaving the space balanced and cleansed.
3. Turn to the West, bow to the Hammer and say 'I give thanks to the Hammer in the West'. Visualize the energy departing as before.
4. Turn to the South, bow to the Hammer and say 'I give thanks to the Hammer in the South.' Visualize the energy departing as before.
5. Turn to the East, bow to the Hammer and say 'I give thanks to the Hammer in the East'. Visualize the energy departing as before.
6. Turn to the North, bow to the Hammer and say 'I give thanks to the Hammer in the North'. Visualize the energy departing as before.
7. Take a moment to acknowledge your connection to your own hammer, dwelling within your heart and say 'This space is now clear.'

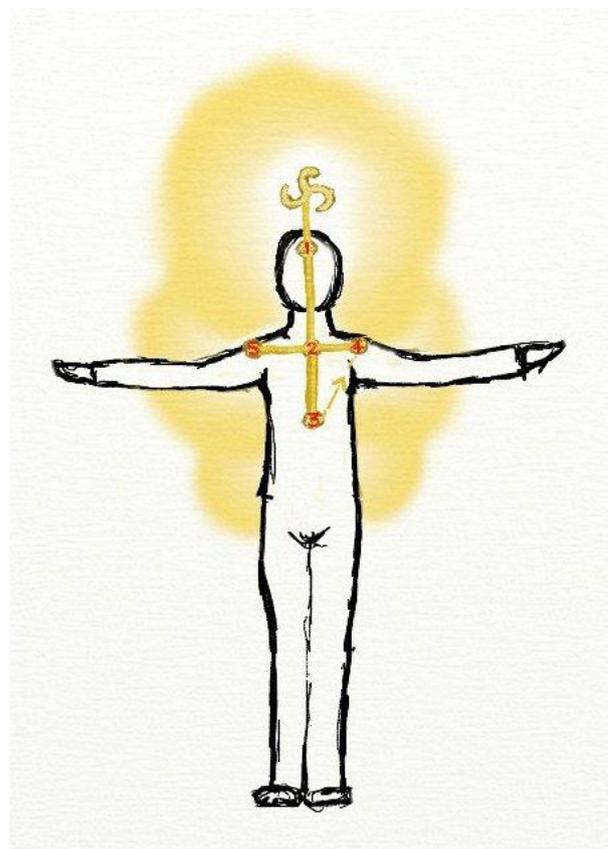
## THE FULL HAMMER RITE

Personally, I do not often work with the full Hammer Rite (particularly the balancing) because I already use the Lesser Banishing Ritual of the Pentagram regularly and find there is too much cross over between the two. However, if you have no intention of ever working with ceremonial magick then the Full Rite will work well for you.

### BALANCING

The full Hammer Rite begins with a working designed to balance the energy levels of the body and to call upon the 'archetypal forces' of Tyr, Odin, Thor, Freyja and Frey. This part of the rite draws heavily on the Qabalistic Cross element of the LBRP (discussed below). Personally, I would not be comfortable performing this working unless I had already undertaken some work with these deities – but this may be because I already have a relationship with them and so cannot imagine connecting with them as archetypes only. An archetype is a 'universal symbol' and, as such I would take these deities as symbols of the following:

1. Tyr – the sky-father and embodiment of divine law
2. Odin – the all-father and embodiment of rulership, communication and growth
3. Thor – the protector of the Earth and Heavens
4. Freyja – the lady of love, beauty, magick and pleasure
5. Freyr – the lord of prosperity and, worldly



success (including success in battle)

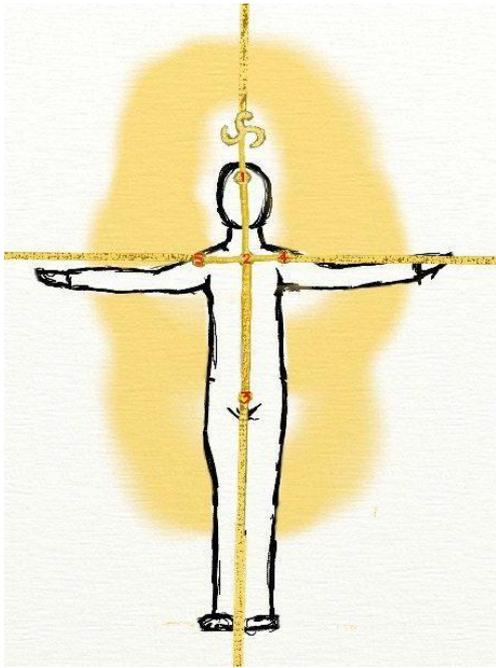
Thorsson doesn't make any reference to the qualities of each deity (but his extensive works suggests that he assumes the practitioner will have that knowledge). When you chant the name of the deity, I would take a moment to focus on the individual qualities he/she represents.

Thorsson also uses the symbolism of the triskelion (see the diagram above), a three pronged symbol which has closer ties to the Celtic tradition than it does the Germanic. He gives no explanation for its use but it is interesting to note Wallis and Johnson's 'triple All-father' discussed earlier and the corresponding choice of deities Thorsson has made for his central column.

1. Visualize a golden triskelion above you and grasp it in your hand so that you hold it in your fist.
2. Draw it down slowly to the front of your forehead (third eye), visualizing a line of pure golden light forming from the point where the triskelion was, down through your body. Touch the knuckle of your thumb to your third eye chanting 'Tyr' (teeer). Visualize your head filling with golden radiance
3. Draw the golden energy down to your sternum (the T shaped breast bone between throat and heart). Touch the knuckle of your thumb to your sternum chanting 'Odin' (oooh-din). Visualize your throat and chest filling with golden radiance.
4. Draw the golden energy down to your solar plexus. Touch the knuckle of your thumb to your solar plexus chanting 'Thor'. Visualize your solar plexus filling with golden light.
5. Draw the golden energy to your left shoulder. Touch the knuckle of your thumb to your left shoulder chanting 'Freyja' (fray-ah). Visualize your left shoulder filling with golden radiance.
6. Draw the golden energy from your left shoulder, across your heart, to your right shoulder. Touch the knuckle of your thumb to your right shoulder chanting 'Frey'. Visualise your right shoulder filling with golden radiance.
7. Drop your arm to your side and focus on the golden energy reaching down from your crown to solar plexus and across from shoulder to shoulder, the energies crossing at your heart.

If you would like to make a full comparison between this working and the Qabalistic Cross, then I would recommend David Rankine's *Climbing the Tree of Life*. Essentially, the practitioner draws light down into the crown, touching it with the index and middle finger and chanting a divine name signifying 'Thou art God', the light is then drawn down to the base chakra (above the genitals) and a divine name signifying 'God the Kingdom' is chanted, the light is then drawn to the right shoulder and a divine name signifying 'God the Power' chanted, then to the right shoulder and a divine name signifying 'God the Glory' is chanted, then the hands are placed over the heart and the divine words for 'To the worlds, lord and faithful King' intoned. The intent is to balance the self and connect with the force of the divine. The significant differences between this and the Hammer Rite balancing (apart from the obvious choice of deities) are: the light is visualized as extending out of the body in all directions to the very edges of the universe; the right shoulder is touched first; and that the lowest point on body is at the base chakra – forming a cross over the body rather than a 'hammer' type shape.

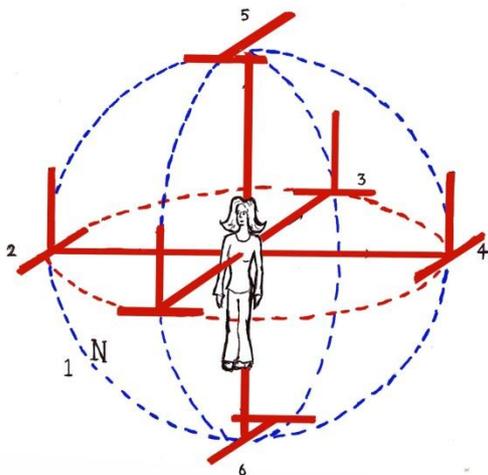
Thorsson describes the cross shape formed by the golden energy as a Hammer but, for me, the Hammer symbolism does not work perfectly as there is an additional 'stem' to the Hammer formed beneath the heart going down to the solar plexus. I don't necessarily think this is a problem if you let go of the notion that you are drawing a Hammer and visualize, instead, a cross of golden energy. I would recommend that you try the ritual as written above, and then also try the following variation.



1. See the energy of the triskelion as originating far above you, beyond space, and descending in a line of golden light to rest above your head.
2. When you pull the energy down from your sternum, bring your hand down to your base (rather than the solar plexus) and touch your knuckle to your pubic bone. Then see the golden energy extending right down into the earth and to the very edges of the universe beneath you.
3. When you touch your knuckle to your shoulders, again visualize the golden line of energy extending out to the very edges of the universe in each direction.

This variation is more in keeping with the original Qabalistic Cross and, for me, has advantages in that it places the heart as a centre of balance within the cosmos and also encapsulates all of the body (rather than the energy all focusing around the chest and ignoring the pelvis and legs entirely).

### HAMMER WORKING



1. Standing in the centre of your space and, facing North, trace the first of the 24 runes (Fehu) at the circumference of the circle, at about the height of your solar plexus. Continue to do this with all 24 of the runes until you end up back at the North tracing the Othala rune. *Note – building a rune circle is, in itself, a complex ritual act. If you have never built a rune circle before I would recommend tracing a line of pure red energy around the circumference of your circle instead (even if you know all the runes in the right order, it takes practice to trace all 24 in equal spaces around a circle).*
2. Still standing in the centre, stretch your arms out and visualize a cross of red energy forming at your centre and stretching out to the four directions until it touches the red circumference of your space.
3. See a blue sphere stretching up and down from the red circumference, growing outwards until it touches at the top and bottom, forming a complete sphere of blue light.
4. As the sphere joins at top and bottom, feel another axis of red light forming, starting at the central axis in your centre and shooting up and down to touch the top and bottom of your circle.
5. Either with your hand, or with your rune wand, feel the red energy flowing from your heart centre and touching the point in the North of the circle. Draw the sign of the Hammer at the North, projecting it out so it sits upon the circumference. If you want to be really flash, you

can use the Old Norse words Thorsson provides (rather than those used in the basic rite): *Hamarr í Nordhri helga vé thettka ok hald vörðh*<sup>2</sup> [Hammer in the North, hallow and hold this holy stead].

6. Turn to the East and do the same thing, saying: *Hamarr í Austri*<sup>3</sup> *helga vé thettka ok hald vörðh*
7. Turn to the South and repeat saying: *Hamarr í Sudhri helga vé thettka ok hald vörðh*
8. Turn to the West and repeat saying: *Hamarr í Vestri helga vé thettka ok hald vörðh*
9. Turn back to the North and look upwards, repeating your actions and saying: *Hamarr yfir mér*<sup>4</sup> *helga vé thettka ok hald vörðh* [Hammer above me, hallow and hold this holy stead].
10. Look downwards and repeat saying: *Hamarr undir mér*<sup>5</sup> *helga vé thettka ok hald vörðh* [Hammer beneath me, hallow and hold this holy stead].
11. Stand in the cross position with your arms outstretched and address the Hammer in the North saying: *Hamarr helga vé thettka ok hald vörðh* [Hammer, hallow and hold this holy stead].
12. Turn to each of the remaining five Hammers in turn and say: *Hamarr helga vé thettka ok hald vörðh*
13. Return to the centre and, with your arms still outstretched say: *Um mik ok í mér Ásgardhr ok Midhgardhr*<sup>6</sup> [Around me and in me, Asgard (the realm of the Gods) and Midgard (the realm of man)].

Thorsson doesn't give instructions for closing your space, so I would follow the instructions I have given in the Basic Hammer Rite, ensuring that you draw the red lines of energy connecting you to the circle, back into yourself and remembering to 'undraw' the red circumference you have created (or speak the name of each rune and bid it farewell).

## SIMPLIFIED HAMMER RITE

The simplified Hammer Rite is of my own making and focuses on reinforcing your relationship with your own Hammer. As you progress, it is good to try variations of the techniques you have learned – perhaps trying different colours, combining elements from different rites as you prefer. Of course, if you are working in a group then the best thing is for everyone to be using the same technique (which is why the Basic Hammer Rite is so good), but for personal work you should feel that you are able to adapt your tools to suit you.

## BALANCING AND CONNECTING

This is a completely optional element which is largely intended to set your focus and connect you to the energy of your own Hammer. Clearly, it is drawn from Thorsson's balancing – but is more in keeping with the Qabalistic Cross in form, and less so in content.

1. Stand with your eyes closed, your feet hip width apart. See yourself standing tall upon the earth and feel that your body is growing – it is still connected to the earth, but your body grows larger and larger until your head is among the stars.

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<sup>2</sup> Hamar ee nor-dhri Helga vay the-ka haald vordh (pronounce 'dh' somewhere between 'd' and 'the')

<sup>3</sup> Ostree

<sup>4</sup> Hamar i-fer mare

<sup>5</sup> Hamar un-dir mare

<sup>6</sup> Oom mik ok ee mare aas-gardh ok mid-gardh

2. Above you, you see a pure golden light which extends outwards in all directions like a shimmering, protective sphere encompassing the universe. You raise your dominant hand over your head, holding your ring and little finger down with your thumb.
3. With your middle and index finger you draw a line of golden light, down from the golden sphere surrounding the universe, and into your crown. As you touch your third eye you chant 'Mjolnir', feeling the strength of your connection to the power of your Hammer which radiates through you from this golden light.
4. You draw the golden line of light down through the centre of your body touch your pubic bone and chanting 'Mjolnir' once more. The golden line of light shoots downwards and connects with the golden energy source of the universe beneath you.
5. You draw your fingers up to your heart and then out to the right, touching your right shoulder and chanting 'Mjolnir'. The light extends outwards, once again connecting to the golden sphere at the very edge of the universe.
6. You draw your fingers back over your heart and out to your left, touching your left shoulder and chanting 'Mjolnir'. The light extends outwards, once again connecting to the golden sphere.
7. Place your hands together over your heart and feel the power of your Hammer within you, powerful, balanced and strong.

### HAMMER WORKING

If you have done the balancing and connecting then, without pausing move on to the working (if not, then begin from this point). Visualise the symbol of the Hammer in shining gold, resting upon the floor in front of you. See it shining with a brilliant radiance, and then solidifying into the shape of your personal Hammer. Reach out with your dominant hand and 'grasp' your Hammer. Feel that the Hammer is a natural extension to your own arm.

Now perform the Basic Hammer Rite in the normal way, only drawing the Hammer sigils with your own Hammer. As a variation, try making the Hammers themselves golden so that your working space becomes surrounded by a sphere of pure gold (rather than a sphere of blue).

When you have drawn your Hammers, place your personal hammer back down on the floor in front of you and see it return first to pure light and then slowly fade, resuming its place within your heart.

### ANGLO-SAXON VARIANTS

If you work with the Anglo-Saxon deities, then you can use small variations to the Hammer Rite to stay in keeping with this. The Full Rite balancing would be performed with Tiw, Woden, Thunor, Freia and Frey – the basic archetypal energies would remain the same but your personal work with these deities would, of course, inform the way you connect with their energies. Instead of saying 'Hammer, Hallow and Hold this Holy Stead', you can simply say 'Thunor weoh' – literally, 'Thunor, make this sacred' (pronounced Thoo-nor vay-oh'.

Working with the Anglo-Saxon rune row within the full Rite will be a bit more complicated as ritual structures tend to work with the 24 rune Elder Futhark. You may be able to fit all of the Anglo-Saxon runes around the perimeter of your circle – but be aware that other workings building on the basic structure work with number and directions as well so will not fit with a longer rune row.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Aesir**                    The primary family of Gods

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>Asatru</b>  | Present day religion, literally meaning ‘true to the Aesir’   |
| <b>Frey</b>    | God of prosperity, fertility, worldly success   |
| <b>Freyja</b>  | Goddess of sorcery, wealth and sexuality.   |
| <b>Hallow</b>  | To bless or make holy   |
| <b>Kenning</b> | An insight that goes deeper than the literal words. An imaginative or poetic way of describing something by using other terms.                  |
| <b>Loki</b>    | The blood brother of Odin, Loki is a trickster, shape-shifter and God of wild-fire  |
| <b>Midgard</b> | ‘Middle Earth’ the world man resides in.  |
| <b>Might</b>   | In this context, ‘rune might’ or ‘rune power’   |
| <b>Mjolnir</b> | Thor’s Hammer – used to hold back the forces of Chaos as well as to bless and purify  |
| <b>Odin</b>    | The All-father, leader of the God, trickster, sage. Odin discovered the runes and is known as a teacher, trickster, sage and magician.          |
| <b>Rune</b>    | Secret/mystery/song.  |
| <b>Stead</b>   | A place, often used to describe the home (‘homestead’)  |
| <b>Thor</b>    | Son of Odin and a giantess, Thor is the God of thunder, strength and protection   |
| <b>Tyr</b>     | The Sky-father, judge, king, hermaphrodite. Tyr sacrificed his hand to save order from chaos and so gave up his role as king                    |
| <b>Vitki</b>   | ‘Wise One’ in Old Norse. One versed in the lore and practice of RuneCraft but not necessarily affiliated to a larger religious or secular group |
| <b>Wight</b>   | A spirit, creature or sentient being  |

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You will find a full reading list with links to beginner, exploratory and specialist texts on my website: <http://www.maginrose.com/runes/reading-list/>

*StarFireAlchemy*

[www.starfirealchemy.co.uk](http://www.starfirealchemy.co.uk)