

## The Beginning: How it all got started.

Myths were created because of people's need to explain natural phenomena, such as thunderstorms, the changing season, even night and day. We could say that people needed to be reassured that those events followed some pattern.

Of even greater importance was the need for some explanation of how the world began and how its people came to exist. The Greeks believed that Chaos was the first state of the universe. At first there was chaos. Out of chaos, Mother Earth (Gaea) was born. Gaea, the Earth, came from this darkness.

In the beginning, before the time of man, there was Gaea. Gaea is also credited with producing the mountains and seas. Earth was young and lonesome, for nothing lived on her yet.

Above her rose Uranus, the Sky, dark and blue, set all over with sparkling stars. He was magnificent to behold, and young Earth looked up at him and fell in love with him. Sky smiled down at Earth, twinkling with his countless stars, and they were joined in love. From their union, the young Earth became Mother Earth, the mover of all living things. Surrounded by her many children, Gaia was no longer lonely.

The Titans were the first children of Mother Earth. They were the first gods and taller than mountains. The Titan children of Gaea and Uranus are of special interest to us because although they were giants, they were human in form. Thus, the Greeks had begun to imagine their gods to be like themselves in appearance. Sitting upon their mountain thrones, the six Titans ruled with their six sisters, the Titanesses, whom they had taken for their wives. Seeing the greatness of his children, Uranus (Father Heaven) was proud; however, this was not to last.



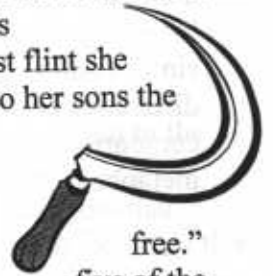
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When Gaea again gave birth, Uranus was not proud. These new children were also huge, but each had only one glowing eye set in the middle of his forehead. They were the three Cyclopes and they were named Lightning, Thunder, and Thunderbolt. They were not handsome gods, but tremendously strong smiths. Sparks from their heavy hammers flashed across the sky and lit up the heavens so brightly that even their father's stars faded.

Time passed and Mother Earth again gave birth to three sons. The site of them filled Uranus (Father Heaven) with disgust, for each of them had fifty heads and a hundred arms. Refusing to allow such ugly creatures to roam the lovely Earth, he flung them and their brothers, the Cyclopes, into the deepest, darkest pit under the earth, Tartarus.

Mother Earth loved her children and could not forgive her husband for his cruelty to them. Out of hardest flint she fashioned a sickle and spoke to her sons the Titans:

"Take this weapon, make an end to your father's cruelty and set your brothers free."  
Fear took hold of the five of the



Titans and they trembled and refused. Only Cronus, the youngest but strongest, dared to take the sickle. Being confronted by his son, Uranus (Father Heaven) knew he couldn't withstand the weapon wielded by Cronus, and he fled giving up his powers. Cronus then seized the position of supreme ruler.

Certainly, Uranus seems to have been an unnatural father and Cronus an unnatural son, but actually their behavior is symbolic, not only of the Greek way of life, but also perhaps of our own. Eventually, don't the children (the new generation) replace the parents?

Cronus was now in power, but just like his father before him, he saw everyone else as a threat to his throne. As a result, he decided to leave the three hundred-handed monsters and the one-eyed giants buried. He released only his fellow Titans.