

ZEUS



MYTHOLOGY OF THE GODS!

Where's the party?



A Look-It-Up Guide to the Gods of Mythology

MEGAN E. BRYANT

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CONTENT CONSULTANT

William Hansen
Professor Emeritus of Classical Studies and Folklore
Indiana University, Bloomington

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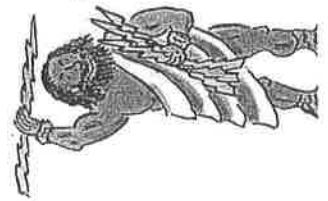
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Profile of Zeus

Sounds Like: zoos

Roman Name: Jupiter

Aliases: Ktesios (protector of the property)
 Polieus (guardian of the city)
 Eleutherios (vindicator of liberty)
 Eposios (observer of all things)
 Soter (savior)

Generation: Titan
 Olympian
 Other

Divine Powers: Ruler of the gods, heavens, earth,
 and humans

Attributes: Storm
 Thunderbolt
 Eagle
 Mountaintop
 Wreath of oak or
 olive leaves
 Oak
 Scepter
 Weather
 Shield

Top 10 Things to Know About Me:

- I had over 115 girlfriends and wives—and over 140 children!
- I saved my brothers and sisters from our dad, Cronus, who had swallowed each one!
- My mom saved me from my dad by hiding me in a cave, where nymphs secretly raised me on the milk of a sacred goat, Amaltheia.
- My jealous wife, Hera, always wanted to get even with my girlfriends.
- The Cyclopes made special thunderbolts that I threw to punish anyone who disobeyed me.
- My daughter, the goddess Athena, burst out of my head fully formed!
- I spent ten years leading the Olympians in a battle with the Titans—and won!
- I invented some terrible punishments—just ask Prometheus!
- As a weather god, I control the amount of rain that falls.
- I became ruler of the gods, the heavens, and mortals by drawing lots with my brothers, Poseidon and Hades.

It's lonely at the top!



ZZEUS

BIG DADDY

Kids! Settle down! Do you want to go back to Olympus? Because we will. I will turn this chariot around *right now*. I see everything, remember? Don't make me hurl my thunderbolts. Stop squabbling—you're all important gods, okay? You're giving me a splitting headache. With 140 kids, I don't have time to deal with your problems. There's a world of human problems I have to solve, too! I know it's not fair. Just be glad I didn't swallow you when you were born!

I'll show you lonely, Mr. Two-Timer!

Hera



REALITY CHECK

In the video game *Master of Olympus*, Zeus, players build a city in ancient Greece. The Olympians—including Zeus—can bless or curse the city.

Family, Flings, Friends, and Foes

Parents



Cronus and Rhea

Siblings



Poseidon



Hades



Demeter



Hera



Hestia

Spouse



Hera

Offspring



Ares



Athena

Flings



Leto



Semele

Friends



Tiresias



Gaea



The Cyclopes

Foes



Tantalus



Sisyphus



Cronus



ZEUS MYTHOLOGY

"Who's your daddy?"

IT'S GREEK TO ME

As the supreme ruler on Mount Olympus, Zeus had many jobs. He was the ruler of the weather and produced rain and storms. He was also the keeper of laws and responsible for making sure that both gods and mortals followed them. He was the protector of Greek kings and their families, the guardian of morality, and the source of prophecies. Quite the busy god!



This stuff will easily do a job number on you!

COUGH IT UP, CRONUS!

Rhea puts one over on Cronus. After the Titan Cronus overthrew his father, Uranus, and freed his Titan siblings from Tartarus, he started a family of his own with his wife and sister, Rhea. But when Cronus heard a prophecy that he would be overthrown by his own son, he became as paranoid and fearful as Uranus had been. Cronus decided that the only way he could prevent the prophecy from coming true would be to swallow his children whole as each one was born! And so Poseidon, Hades, Demeter, Hestia, and Hera were all swallowed.

Rhea soon grew tired of losing her children this way. She hatched a plan: with her mother-

in-law, Gaia. When Rhea's sixth child, Zeus, was born, she was ready to trick Cronus.

Rhea presented Cronus with a stone wrapped in blankets, which he promptly swallowed without even looking at it. Then Rhea hid baby Zeus on the island of Crete, where he was raised by nymphs.

Cronus never suspected that one of his children had escaped. When Zeus reached adulthood, he disguised himself as Cronus's cupbearer and snuck a potion into Cronus's drink that made him vomit up all of Zeus's siblings. Zeus was finally joined by his powerful siblings, and they were ready to begin a war against the father who had tried to oppress them.

TRIUMPH IN THE TITANOMACHY

Zeus plays to win—and he wins it all in the war with the Titans.

Zeus knew that he and the Olympians would never be safe while Cronus was in power. So once his siblings had become free, Zeus started a war with the Titans called the Titanomachy. The war raged for ten years.

It involved a great number of powerful creatures, gods, and goddesses. Led by Cronus, the powerful Titans fought on one side. On the other side, Zeus was joined by his siblings Poseidon, Hades, Demeter, Hera, and Hestia. The Titans Prometheus and Epimetheus betrayed their family by joining with Zeus.

The turning point of the war came when Zeus freed the Hecatoncheires and the Cyclopes from Tartarus in

exchange for their loyalty during the war. With their strength on his side, Zeus was bound to win—especially when the Cyclopes

We're with you, Zeus.



The Cyclopes

Thunderbolt



Helmet of invisibility



Trident



Weapons Courtesy of the Cyclopes

created three powerful weapons for the Olympians: Zeus's thunderbolts, Poseidon's trident, and Hades' helmet of invisibility. When the Titans finally surrendered, Zeus imprisoned them in Tartarus so that they would not be a threat anymore—and the era of the Olympians officially began.

THE FIRST OLYMPICS

Let the games begin—as long as they honor Zeus!

Some stories claim that the Olympics were founded by the hero Heracles, Zeus's son with Alcmena. According to these stories, Heracles started the games to honor Zeus. But according to other stories, a ferocious wrestling match between Zeus and Cronus marked the first Olympic Games. Still other stories say that Zeus instituted the Olympic Games as a tradition to mark his victory in the Titanomachy.

REALITY CHECK

Historical record shows that the Olympic Games were officially founded in 776 BCE in Olympia, Greece. The first 13 Olympics featured just one event: a foot race. Over the years more events were added, including wrestling, boxing, chariot races, and armored fighting.



First Olympics



“We’re all one big, happy family!”

loves, and she was determined to make their lives miserable. Zeus’s girlfriends, especially Callisto, Io, Semele, and Leto, all suffered under Hera’s attentions. Despite the grief his wandering eye caused Hera, Zeus continued in his ways, fathering some of the most powerful gods, goddesses, and mortals, including Apollo, Artemis, Athena, Dionysus, Hermes, Heracles, Helen of Troy, Perseus, Tantalus, Orion, and Minos. With Hera, Zeus’s children included Ares, Hebe, and Eileithyia.

DADDY OF THEM ALL

Zeus is in the house. Of all his amazing powers and accomplishments, Zeus may be best known for his numerous love affairs—and his huge family. As the most powerful god in the pantheon, when Zeus desired someone—mortal, god, or goddess—nothing could stand in his way, much to the dismay of his wife, Hera. Zeus had relationships with more than 115 females, starting with his first wife, Metis, whom he swallowed when it was prophesied that she would bear a child more powerful than Zeus.



From the Desk of ZEUS

To: All major and minor deities
It has come to my attention that my wife, Hera, may be intimidating some of you, especially those of you who are charming and attractive. Fear not, for Hera will be severely punished if she continues this behavior. None of you should be afraid of getting to know me better—say, in my palace, over a gourmet, candlelight dinner of nectar and ambrosia. Just tell me when, and I’ll make all the arrangements!

Z



ATTENDANTS ON OLYMPUS

Even Zeus needs a little advice sometimes.

Zeus was almighty, but that didn’t mean he wanted to do everything himself! So he wisely surrounded himself with trusted advisers: the goddesses Themis, Dike, Nemesis, and Nike. Themis was a Titan and the guardian of divine law and order. She gave good advice to Zeus—and he liked it so much that he made her his girlfriend!

Themis and Zeus had a daughter, Dike, who was the goddess of human justice.

Dike advised Zeus about the problems of mortals. Nemesis, the goddess of **retribution**, may also have been a daughter of Zeus. She handed out

fortune and misfortune to humans, making sure that all mortals had their share of sadness and tragedy. Nike, the goddess of victory, was another ally of Zeus’s—a smart move on his part, given the battles he engaged in (like the Trojan War). Nemesis, the goddess of retribution, was another ally of Zeus’s—a smart move on his part, given the battles he engaged in (like the Trojan War). Nemesis, the goddess of retribution, was another ally of Zeus’s—a smart move on his part, given the battles he engaged in (like the Trojan War).



Zeus sneaks in through the ceiling.

DANAË AND PERSEUS

Zeus helps a prophecy come true—and has another kid, too!

Danaë was the daughter of King Acrisius of Argos, who imprisoned her because of a prophecy that her son would kill him. Zeus fell in love with Danaë. Because she was locked away, Zeus transformed himself into a shower of gold and poured into her chamber. Danaë later gave birth to Zeus’s son Perseus.

King Acrisius was not willing to give in to the prophecy yet. He locked Danaë and Perseus in a large chest and set them adrift in the sea, where they floated aimlessly. Zeus intervened, guiding the chest to the shores

of the island of Seriphos, where King Polydectes welcomed them. Polydectes soon fell in love with Danaë and tried to get rid of Perseus by setting him on an impossible task: slaying the monstrous Gorgon Medusa. Perseus proved himself a hero when he killed Medusa and then used her severed head to turn Polydectes to stone so he could rescue his mother. Acrisius tried to flee from his grandson Perseus, but the prophecy was fulfilled when Perseus accidentally killed his grandfather during a discus-throwing competition.

Zeus

by Nancy Loewen

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Zeus

Consultant:

Kenneth F. Kitchell Jr., Ph.D.

Department of Classics

University of Massachusetts, Amherst

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Stories about Zeus

Zeus had unlimited power as king of the gods. He often used his power to punish people or to change history. His actions often affected life on the earth.

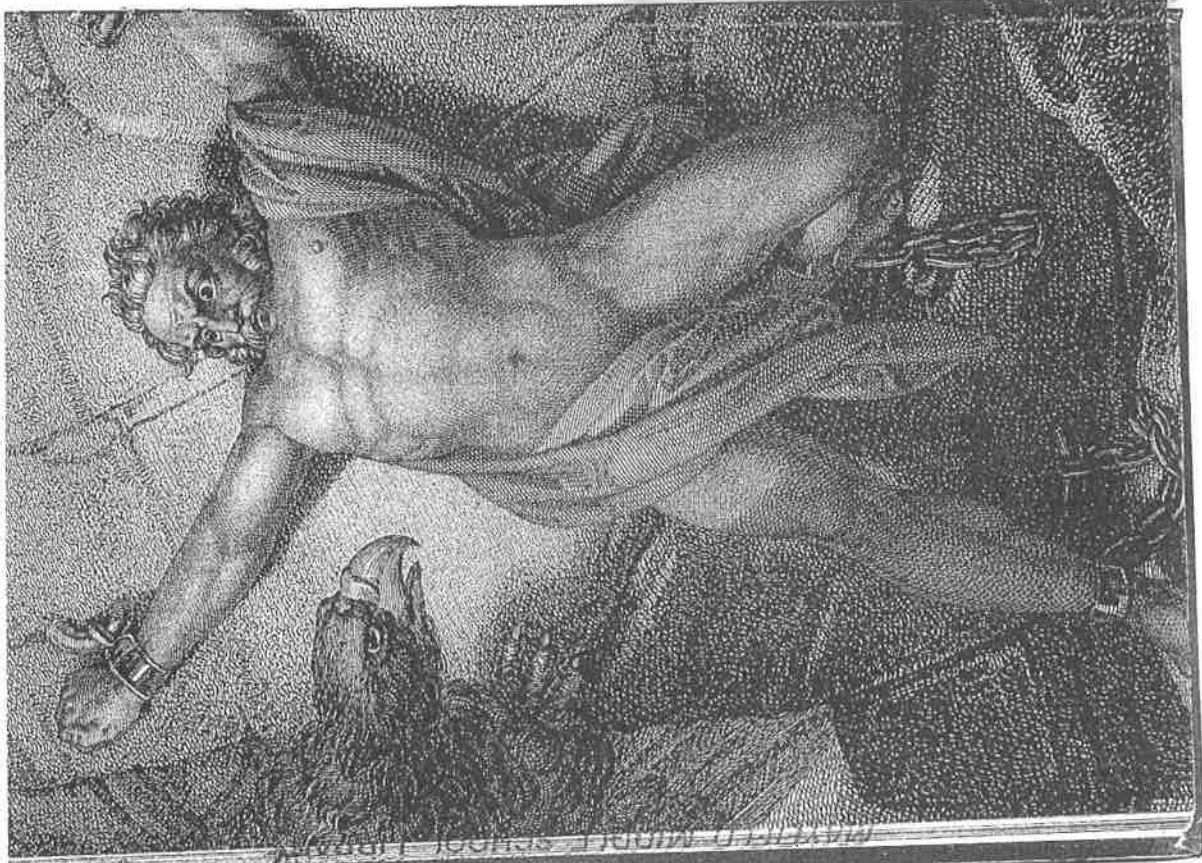
Both gods and people obeyed Zeus' laws. They did not want to make him angry. Zeus punished those who disobeyed him. Prometheus received a severe punishment from Zeus.

Prometheus

Prometheus was a titan. He felt sorry for humans. He wanted to help them. So he gave humans the ability to make fire. Humans then could use fire to cook food and to keep warm.

Zeus was furious. Zeus did not want humans to use fire. He felt it made humans too powerful.

Zeus gave Prometheus a terrible punishment. Zeus was not happy that Prometheus gave humans fire.



Zeus chained Prometheus to a mountain. Every day, Zeus sent an eagle to eat Prometheus' liver. At night, the liver grew back again. Prometheus suffered from this punishment for many years. Finally, the hero Heracles set Prometheus free.

The Flood

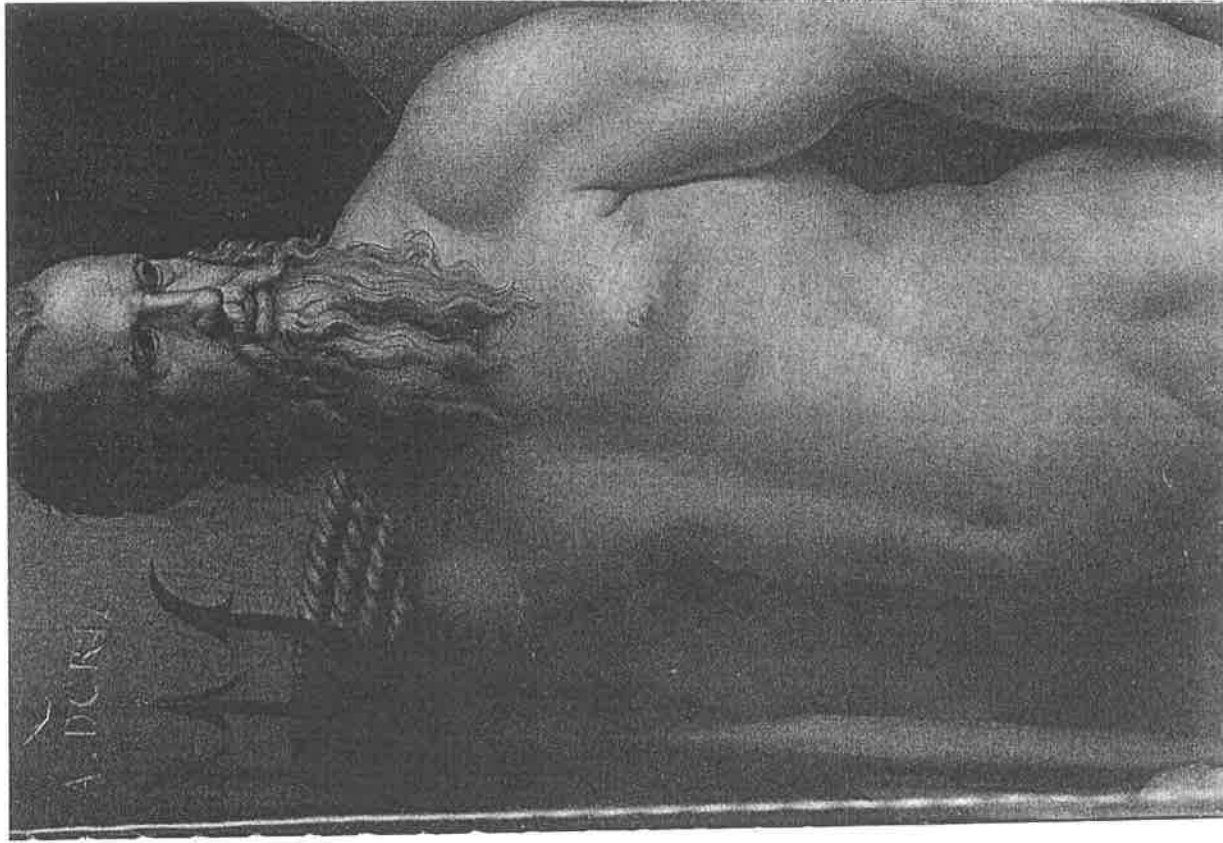
Zeus thought people on the Earth were evil because they sacrificed their babies to the gods. Zeus became angry with people on Earth. Zeus decided to punish the whole world.

Zeus decided to send a flood to cover the Earth. He asked his brother Poseidon for help.

Prometheus found out about the plans for the flood. He wanted to save his demigod son. He told his son Deucalion to build a large chest. Deucalion built the chest and put food and water inside it. Then Deucalion and his wife, Pyrrha, got inside the chest.

Zeus caused rain to fall from the sky. Poseidon made rivers and oceans flood the

Poseidon made rivers and oceans flood the land.



[Back](#)

[Print this page](#)

Zeus

Zeus, «*zōos*», was the ruler of the gods in Greek mythology. Zeus was a sky and weather god, especially associated with rain, thunder, and lightning. The Greeks believed he was all-knowing and all-seeing. The Greeks considered Zeus a father figure and a protector, especially of guests and strangers. The Roman god Jupiter was equivalent to Zeus (see [Jupiter](#)).



Statue of Zeus
Picture

Zeus was the son of Cronus and Rhea, members of an earlier race of ruling gods called the Titans. Zeus and the other children of Cronus defeated the Titans. Zeus then took Cronus' place and ruled from his home on Mount Olympus. He headed a family of 12 major gods and goddesses called the Olympians. Some lesser gods also lived on Olympus. Zeus's brothers were the gods Hades and Poseidon. Hades ruled the underworld, and Poseidon ruled the seas. The goddesses Demeter, Hera, and Hestia were Zeus's sisters.

At the time Zeus was introduced in Greece, the religion of that area was based on fertility. Each community had a major fertility goddess and a male god associated with her. Zeus eventually took the place of many of these male gods, and became the husband or lover of the goddesses. Later, Hera became Zeus's wife, and other goddesses took a lesser status. Zeus had many love affairs with goddesses and mortal women and fathered many children. His children included the goddesses Aphrodite, the god Apollo, Dionysus, and Hermes; and the mortal heroes Perseus and Heracles (*Hercules* in Latin). Zeus alone gave birth to the goddess Athena.

In art, Zeus is depicted as bearded and majestic, often holding a thunderbolt. The eagle and the oak tree were symbols associated with Zeus.

Contributor:

• F. Carter Phillips, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of Classics, Vanderbilt University.

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Zeus

In Greek mythology, Zeus was the chief god of the Olympian pantheon, the youngest son of the Titans Cronos and Rhea, and brother-husband to Hera. After overthrowing Cronos with the help of Rhea, Zeus became the new chief god, conquering all those who challenged him. Afterwards, he created the world order by assigning each god or goddess a sphere of influence, and thus, he ruled over both god and man. Zeus was also associated with the weather and was believed to control rain, thunder, and lightning. His symbols were the thunderbolt and the eagle, and he was identified with the Roman god Jupiter (sometimes called Jove).



Presiding over mankind on top of Mount Olympus, Zeus prosecuted wrongdoers and maintained justice, aiding not only kings but also protecting beggars. Zeus responded to prayers from all people, indicating his response to prayers in omens, dreams, prophecies, or in occurrences of lightning and thunder. Because Zeus was all-seeing, he would not only punish evil, but also dispense rewards for heroic conduct.

Zeus was married to Hera, although she wasn't his only wife. He was first married to the goddess Metis, whom he swallowed whole when she became pregnant because of a prophecy that said the resulting son would usurp his throne. When the child, Athena, was born, she leapt fully armed from Zeus' head. His second wife was the goddess Themis, with whom he had the Horae and the Fates. He also fathered Aphrodite, Apollo, Artemis, Dionysus, Hermes, Persephone, and the Muses. Such Greek heroes as Hercules, Achilles, and Ajax were also fathered by Zeus, although their mothers were mortal.

Only a few major city festivals were held in honor of Zeus instead of celebrations honoring the "local" gods. The main festival dedicated to Zeus was the Olympic Games, which were introduced in 776 BCE. At Olympia, the cult statue of Zeus is reported to have been built by the sculptor Phidias. Standing at 22 feet wide and 40 feet high, the sculpture, which was later destroyed, became one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

When Zeus was depicted in Archaic Greek art, he was shown walking forward with a lightning bolt and occasionally with an eagle. In Classical Greek art, Zeus was portrayed enthroned, holding a scepter—mimicking Phidias's sculptural depiction of Zeus. During the Classical and Hellenistic periods of Greece, some Greeks worshipped Zeus with almost monotheistic fervor. The dramatist Aeschylus described Zeus as everything from the ether to the sky to everything in between and more.

The origins of the name Zeus are Indo-European, and its original meaning was "sky father." Zeus was later equated with chief gods in several world mythologies, including the Roman god Jupiter who was also a sky god who sent rain in times of drought. In Roman mythology, Jupiter was particularly associated with treaties and oaths. Each place that lightning struck was made his property and then encircled with a wall. Jupiter was worshipped on hilltops, and on the Capitoline Hill in Rome there are remains of a temple dedicated to Jupiter Optimus Maximus ("the best and greatest Jupiter"); Roman parades, celebrating a triumphant army, ended at his temple. During the Roman Empire, Jupiter retained his position as chief god, and he became protector of the Roman emperor, who symbolized the Roman people.

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