

## ZEUS

**Zeus** ([Ancient Greek](#): Ζεύς, *Zeús*; [Modern Greek](#): Δίας, *Días*; English pronunciation /zjuːs/<sup>[3]</sup>) is the "Father of Gods and men" (πατήρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε, *patēr andrōn te theōn te*)<sup>[4]</sup> who rules the Olympians of [Mount Olympus](#) as a father rules the family according to the [ancient Greek religion](#). He is the [god of sky](#) and [thunder](#) in [Greek mythology](#). Zeus is etymologically cognate with and, under Hellenic influence, became particularly closely identified with Roman [Jupiter](#).

Zeus is the child of [Cronus](#) and [Rhea](#), and the youngest of his siblings. In most traditions he is married to [Hera](#), although, at the oracle of [Dodona](#), his consort is [Dione](#): according to the *Iliad*, he is the father of [Aphrodite](#) by Dione.<sup>[5]</sup> He is known for his romantic escapades. These resulted in many godly and heroic offspring, including [Athena](#), [Apollo](#) and [Artemis](#), [Hermes](#), [Persephone](#) (by [Demeter](#)), [Dionysus](#), [Perseus](#), [Heracles](#), [Helen of Troy](#), [Minos](#), and the [Muses](#) (by [Mnemosyne](#)); by Hera, he is usually said to have fathered [Ares](#), [Hebe](#) and [Hephaestus](#).<sup>[6]</sup>

As [Walter Burkert](#) points out in his book, *Greek Religion*, "Even the gods who are not his natural children address him as Father, and all the gods rise in his presence."<sup>[7]</sup> For the Greeks, he was the [King of the Gods](#), who oversaw the universe. As [Pausanias](#) observed, "That Zeus is king in heaven is a saying common to all men".<sup>[8]</sup> In Hesiod's *Theogony* Zeus assigns the various gods their roles. In the *Homeric Hymns* he is referred to as the chieftain of the gods.

His symbols are the [thunderbolt](#), [eagle](#), [bull](#), and [oak](#). In addition to his [Indo-European inheritance](#), the classical "cloud-gatherer" also derives certain iconographic traits from the cultures of the [Ancient Near East](#), such as the [scepter](#). Zeus is frequently depicted by Greek artists in one of two poses: standing, striding forward, with a thunderbolt leveled in his raised right hand, or seated in majesty.

### King of the gods

After reaching manhood, Zeus forced Cronus to disgorge first the stone (which was set down at [Pytho](#) under the glens of [Parnassus](#) to be a sign to mortal men, the [Omphalos](#)) then his siblings in reverse order of swallowing. In some versions, [Metis](#) gave Cronus an [emetic](#) to force him to disgorge the babies, or Zeus cut Cronus' [stomach](#) open. Then Zeus released the brothers of Cronus, the [Gigantes](#), the [Hecatonchires](#) and the [Cyclopes](#), from their dungeon in [Tartarus](#), killing their guard, [Campe](#).

As a token of their appreciation, the Cyclopes gave him [thunder](#) and the thunderbolt, or [lightning](#), which had previously been hidden by Gaia. Together, Zeus and his brothers and sisters, along with the Gigantes, Hecatonchires and Cyclopes overthrew Cronus and the other Titans, in the combat called the [Titanomachy](#). The defeated Titans were then

cast into a shadowy underworld region known as Tartarus. [Atlas](#), one of the titans that fought against Zeus, was punished by having to hold up the sky.

After the battle with the Titans, Zeus shared the world with his elder brothers, [Poseidon](#) and [Hades](#), by drawing lots: Zeus got the sky and air, Poseidon the waters, and Hades the world of the dead (the underworld). The ancient Earth, [Gaia](#), could not be claimed; she was left to all three, each according to their capabilities, which explains why Poseidon was the "earth-shaker" (the god of earthquakes) and Hades claimed the humans that died (see also [Penthus](#)).

Gaia resented the way Zeus had treated the Titans, because they were her children. Soon after taking the throne as king of the gods, Zeus had to fight some of Gaia's other children, the [monsters Typhon](#) and [Echidna](#). He vanquished Typhon and trapped him under [Mount Etna](#), but left Echidna and her children alive.

(Source: Wikipedia. "Zeus")

