**The Trojan War**

Zeus held a big feast to celebrate Peleus’ (hero) and Thetis’ (goddess) wedding. All of the Olympian gods were invited – except for the goddess of strife, Eris. Very disappointed, she threw her gift amongst the crowd of guests, which was a golden apple that had the inscription, “for the fairest”.

Aphrodite, Athena, and Hera began to argue about who should have the apple. Zeus was not able to settle the issue, so he sent the goddesses to Paris, the prince of Troy, to decide. The goddesses started to suborn and bribe him. Finally, Paris chose Aphrodite. As a result, Aphrodite offered him the most beautiful woman in the world, Helen, to be his wife.

Helen was kidnapped by the Trojan prince as his prize for determining Aphrodite to be the most beautiful goddess in an argument between Aphrodite, Athena, and Hera at the wedlock of Peleus and Thetis. Menelaus wanted to have Helen back and desired revenge for the Trojan’s insolence.

There are other speculations that Zeus started the Trojan War to reduce the population, especially of demigods, as a result of his being an unfaithful husband.

**THE GREEK ARMY**

The alliance of Greek forces (or Archaeans, as Homer usually describes them) was led by King Agamemnon of Mycenae. Homer described their army as ‘tens of thousands’, or more poetically, ‘as many as the leaves and flowers that come in springtime’.

The Greek warriors included some of the greatest fighters who displayed incredible courage on the battlefield. They also had a genealogical link between the gods and ordinary men from their divine mother or father (the other parent was a mortal).

The Greeks were supported by some of the Olympian gods of Greek religion, including Athena, Poseidon, Hera, Hephaistos, Hermes, and Thetis. All of them gave direct or indirect aid to the Greeks in Homer’s account of the war. They also had their favorites amongst the men fighting on the plains of Troy and usually guarded them by diverting spears and even spiriting them away in the battlefield to place them somewhere safe, far from danger.

**THE TROJAN ARMY**

The Trojan army protecting the great city of Troy was led by their king, Priam, who had assistance from a long list of allies, including the Carians, Halizones, Kaukonen, Kikones, Lycians, Minoans, Mysians, Paeonians, Paphlagonia, Pelasgians, Phrygians, and Thracians.

The Trojans also had their semi-divine heroes, including Hektor (son of Priam), Aeneas, Sarpedon, Glaukos, Phorkys, Polydamas, and Rhesus. Furthermore, the Trojans received assistance from the gods, including Apollo, Aphrodite, Ares, and Leto.

The Trojan walls served as strong fortifications for defense against the Greeks. [Poseidon](https://kidskonnect.com/people/poseidon/) and Apollo built the walls as punishment after an act of impiety. They built it over a year of forced service to Trojan King Laomedon.

**THE TROJAN WAR**

After Helen was abducted by Paris, Menelaus got his brother, Agamemnon, to lead a voyage to find her and get her back. This can be said to be the beginning of the Trojan War. Agamemnon was able to gather other Greek heroes, such as Odysseus, Ajax, Nestor, and Achilles, to join him on this adventure.

The Trojan War lasted for ten years. It was punctuated by battles and skirmishes. It was lastly ended when the Greeks retreated from camp and left behind a large wooden horse outside the gates of Troy. Inside Troy, there were many debates on if they should bring the wooden horse in, including unheeded warnings by Cassandra, Priam’s daughter. Ultimately, the horse was brought into the city.

As planned, the horse would open up once nighttime fell, and the Greek soldiers would come out. Inside the territory of the city, the Greeks were able to destroy the city of Troy and win the war.

**AFTERMATH OF THE TROJAN WAR**

Helen was brought back to Argos. Only Aeneas from the Trojan heroes was able to escape, and he eventually set up a new home in Italy.

The Greeks received the consequence of their triumph, though. Because of their pitiless ravaging of the city and its individuals, including outrageous sacrilegious acts like the assault of Cassandra – daughter of King Priam, the gods penalized them and caused storms to wreck their ships. Those who did eventually come back to shore were made to endure a long and tough voyage home. Even then, a number of the Greeks who made it back to their land only faced further misfortune and disaster.