

= God of War : Chains of Olympus =

God of War : Chains of Olympus is a third @-@ person action @-@ adventure video game developed by Ready at Dawn and Santa Monica Studio , and published by Sony Computer Entertainment ( SCE ) . It was first released for the PlayStation Portable ( PSP ) handheld console on March 4 , 2008 . The game is the fourth installment in the God of War series , the second chronologically , and a prequel to the original God of War . It is loosely based on Greek mythology and set in ancient Greece , with vengeance as its central motif . The player controls Kratos , a Spartan warrior who serves the Olympian Gods . Kratos is guided by the goddess Athena , who instructs him to find the Sun God Helios , as the Dream God Morpheus has caused many of the gods to slumber in Helios ' absence . With the power of the Sun and the aid of the Titan Atlas , Morpheus and the Queen of the Underworld Persephone intend to destroy the Pillar of the World and in turn Olympus .

The gameplay is similar to the previous installments , with a focus on combo @-@ based combat , achieved through the player 's main weapon ? the Blades of Chaos ? and secondary weapons acquired throughout the game . It features quick time events that require the player to complete game controller actions in a timed sequence to defeat stronger enemies and bosses . The player can use up to three magical attacks as alternative combat options . The game also features puzzles and platforming elements . The control setup was reconfigured for the PSP , as it has fewer buttons than the PlayStation 2 's controller . Ready at Dawn 's solution for the controls received praise from critics .

Debuting at No. 5 on the North American charts , Chains of Olympus achieved the highest composite score for a PSP title from Metacritic and GameRankings . 1UP stated that the game is " a technical showpiece for Sony , and arguably the best @-@ looking game on the system . " It has won several awards , including " Best PSP Action Game " , " Best Graphics Technology " , and " Best Use of Sound " . In September 2010 , GamePro named Chains of Olympus the best PSP game . By June 2012 , the game had sold 3 @.@ 2 million copies worldwide , making it the fourth best @-@ selling PlayStation Portable game of all time . Together with God of War : Ghost of Sparta , Chains of Olympus was remastered and released on September 13 , 2011 , as part of the God of War : Origins Collection for the PlayStation 3 ( PS3 ) . The remastered version was included in the God of War Saga released on August 28 , 2012 , also for PlayStation 3 .

= = Gameplay = =

God of War : Chains of Olympus is a third @-@ person single @-@ player video game viewed from a fixed camera perspective . The player controls the character Kratos in combo @-@ based combat , platforming , and puzzle game elements , and battles foes who primarily stem from Greek mythology , including cyclopes , Gorgons , satyrs , harpies , minotaurs , hoplites , and sphinxes . Morpheus beasts , shades , banshees , fire guards , fire sentries , hyperion guards , and death knights were created specifically for the game . Platforming elements require the player to climb walls , jump across chasms , swing on ropes , and balance across beams to proceed through sections of the game . Some puzzles are simple , such as moving a box so that the player can use it as a jumping @-@ off point to access a pathway unreachable with normal jumping , but others are more complex , such as finding several items across different areas of the game to unlock one door .

= = = Combat = = =

Kratos ' main weapon is the Blades of Chaos : a pair of blades attached to chains that are wrapped around the character 's wrists and forearms . In gameplay , the blades can be swung offensively in various maneuvers . As the game progresses , Kratos acquires new weapons ? the Sun Shield and Gauntlet of Zeus ? offering alternative combat options . Kratos only learns three magical abilities , as opposed to four in previous installments , including the Efrete , the Light of Dawn , and Charon 's

Wrath , giving him a variety of ways to attack and kill enemies . He acquires the relic Triton 's Lance ? similar to Poseidon 's Trident in God of War ? which allows him to breathe underwater ; a necessary ability as parts of the game require long periods of time there .

The challenge mode in this game is called the Challenge of Hades ( five trials ) , and requires players to complete a series of specific tasks ( e.g. , Burn 50 soldiers with the Efreet ) . It is unlocked by completing the game . The player may unlock bonus costumes for Kratos , behind @-@ the @-@ scenes videos , and concept art of the characters and environments , as rewards . Completion of each of the game 's difficulty levels unlocks additional rewards .

= = Synopsis = =

= = = Setting = = =

As with the previous games in the God of War franchise , God of War : Chains of Olympus is set in an alternate version of ancient Greece , populated by the Olympian Gods , Titans , and other beings of Greek mythology . With the exception of flashbacks , the events are set between those of the games Ascension ( 2013 ) and God of War ( 2005 ) . Several locations are explored , including the real world locations of the ancient cities of Attica and Marathon , the latter including fictional settings of the Temple of Helios and the Caves of Olympus , and several other fictional locations , including the Underworld , which features scenes at the River Styx , Tartarus , the Fields of Elysium , and the Temple of Persephone .

Attica is a war @-@ torn city under assault by the Persian Empire and their pet basilisk , and is the site of Eurybiades ' last battle . The city of Marathon is covered in the black fog of the Dream God , Morpheus . Just beyond the city is the Temple of Helios , which sits atop the Sun Chariot , which has plummeted to Earth in Helios ' absence . Boreas , Zephyros , Euros , and Notos , gods of the north , west , east , and south winds , respectively , reside in the temple and guide the chariot . The Caves of Olympus is an underground cavern below Mount Olympus and houses the goddess Eos , the Primordial Fires , and a statue of Triton . The Underworld is the underground realm of the dead and is host to the River Styx and ferryman of the dead , Charon . Tartarus is the prison of the dead and the Titans where the massive Titan Hyperion is chained . The Fields of Elysium are home to deserving souls that roam peacefully and are overlooked by the Temple of Persephone .

= = = Characters = = =

The protagonist of the game is Kratos ( voiced by Terrence C. Carson ) , a former Captain of Sparta 's Army , and once servant to the God of War , Ares . He now serves the other Olympian Gods in hopes that they will free him of his nightmares . Other characters include Kratos ' mentor and ally Athena ( Erin Torpey ) , the Goddess of Wisdom ; Eos ( Erin Torpey ) , the Goddess of Dawn and sister of Helios ; Persephone ( Marina Gordon ) , the Queen of the Underworld and the main antagonist ; and Atlas ( Fred Tatasciore ) , a four @-@ armed Titan imprisoned in Tartarus after the Great War . Kratos ' deceased daughter Calliope ( Debi Derryberry ) briefly reunites with him in the Fields of Elysium and his wife Lysandra appears in a flashback . Minor characters include Helios ( Dwight Schultz ) , the captured Sun God ; Charon ( Dwight Schultz ) , the ferryman of the Underworld ; and the Persian King ( Fred Tatasciore ) , leader of the Persian forces attacking Attica . The Dream God Morpheus is an unseen character that affects the plot .

= = = Plot = = =

During Kratos ' ten years of service to the Olympian Gods , he is sent to the city of Attica to help defend it from the invading Persian army . After successfully killing the Persian King , decimating his army and slaying their pet basilisk , Kratos observes the Sun fall from the sky , plunging the world into darkness . As he fights his way through the city of Marathon , the Spartan witnesses the black

fog of the Olympian Morpheus cover the land . He hears a haunting flute melody , which he recognizes as a melody once played by his deceased daughter Calliope . Finding the Temple of Helios , Kratos is tasked by Athena to find the missing Sun God , as Morpheus has caused many of the gods to fall into a deep slumber in the absence of light . The Spartan eventually locates Helios ' sister , Eos , who tells Kratos that the Titan Atlas has abducted her brother . Eos advises Kratos to seek the Primordial Fires , which he uses to awaken the fire steeds of Helios . The steeds take the Spartan to the Underworld , where he has two encounters with Charon at the River Styx . Although Charon initially defeats Kratos and banishes him to Tartarus , the Spartan returns and destroys the ferryman .

After locating the Temple of Persephone and confronting the Queen of the Underworld , Kratos is given a choice : renounce his power and be with his deceased daughter ( at a cost to mankind ) or proceed with his mission . Kratos sacrifices his weapons and power to be reunited with his daughter , but discovers that Persephone is embittered by Zeus ' betrayal and her imprisonment in the Underworld with her husband Hades . While he was distracted by his reunion with Calliope , Persephone 's ally Atlas was using the power of the kidnapped Helios to destroy the Pillar of the World , which would also end Olympus . Choosing to abandon Calliope forever , Kratos takes back his power and binds Atlas to the Pillar of the World he sought to destroy , forcing the Titan to hold the weight of the world on his shoulders . Kratos then battles Persephone to the death . Although victorious , he is warned by a dying Persephone that his suffering will never end . Atlas also warns Kratos that he will eventually regret helping the gods and that he and Atlas will meet again . Kratos then rides the Sun Chariot back to the mortal world and into the sky as Morpheus retreats .

In a post @-@ credits scene , Kratos is still riding Helios ' chariot back into the sky and after seeing the return of the Sun , Kratos loses consciousness from the exertion and plummets to the ground . At the last moment , Kratos is saved by Athena and Helios , and Athena tells Helios that " He will live "

= = Development = =

Game developer Ready at Dawn pitched the idea of a God of War game for the PlayStation Portable to SCE Santa Monica Studio soon after the original God of War launched . In February 2007 , Ready at Dawn posted a teaser featuring " Coming Soon " in the God of War font . An editor from 1UP obtained an early copy of God of War II and posted the game 's instruction manual , featuring a one @-@ page teaser with " PSP " in the Omega symbol and stating " Coming 2007 " . On March 12 , 2007 , God of War II was launched at the Metreon : God of War II Game Director Cory Barlog officially confirmed the development of Chains of Olympus , stating " It is its own story that connects to the overall story . God of War , God of War II , and then if all the stars align God of War III will be the telling of a trilogy . This PSP story will be a further fleshing out . " An initial trailer for Chains of Olympus was released on April 25 , 2007 , coinciding with the announcement of a demo on UMD ? the optical disc medium for the PSP . The trailer is narrated by voice actress Linda Hunt .

God of War : Chains of Olympus uses a proprietary , in @-@ house engine referred to as the Ready at Dawn engine , which expanded on the engine created for their previous game , Daxter ( 2006 ) , to include a fluid and cloth simulator . The camera system was modified to cater to the fixed cinematic camera for God of War gameplay , and the lighting system was reworked to aid in presenting realistic graphics . The game was originally designed for the PlayStation Portable 's restricted 222 megahertz ( MHz ) processor . Ready at Dawn repeatedly contacted Sony regarding increasing the clock speed of the PSP on account of the difference to the game and had developed a version of the game with higher speed . Sony released a firmware upgrade that allowed games to use the full 333 MHz processor . The faster processor allowed for more realistic blood effects , lighting effects , and shadows as well as improved enemy intelligence . The upgrade , however , noticeably decreased battery life . After the game 's completion , Game Director Ru Weerasuriya stated multiplayer options and other puzzles , characters , and dialogue had to be removed due to time constraints .

= = = Audio = = =

Two of the voice actors returned from the previous installments to reprise their roles , which were Terrence C. Carson and Linda Hunt , who voiced Kratos and the narrator respectively . Erin Torpey adopted the dual roles of Athena and Eos . Fred Tatasciore , who voiced different characters in previous installments , returned , and in this game , voiced both Atlas and the Persian King . Carole Ruggier and Michael Clarke Duncan did not return to reprise their roles , which were Athena and Atlas respectively . Voice actor Dwight Schultz voiced both Charon and Helios ; Debi Derryberry voiced Calliope and continued this role in a later installment ; and Marina Gordon provided the voice of Persephone . Brian Kimmet , Don Luce , and Andrew Wheeler provided the voices of several minor characters and Keythe Farley was the Voice Director .

The soundtrack was composed by Gerard K. Marino , but to date , it has not been commercially released . After the release of the demo disc , Ready at Dawn offered pre @-@ order customers a music track on disc titled " Battle of Attica " . Composer Gerard Marino stated that it was the first cue written for the game , based on concept art and screenshots . Marino composed roughly thirteen minutes of music for the game and re @-@ worked other music from the previous titles . Three tracks from the soundtrack are included as bonus tracks on the God of War : Ghost of Sparta soundtrack .

= = Release = =

The demo disc , officially titled God of War : Chains of Olympus ? Special Edition : Battle of Attica , was released on September 27 , 2007 . In the demo , Kratos battles Persian soldiers and a giant basilisk . The demo progresses through the city of Attica as Kratos chases the basilisk , culminating with Kratos fighting the Persian King . The disc also included a developer video and a lanyard in the shape of the Greek letter Omega . Following the demo 's release , a downloadable version was made available through the PlayStation Store in North American and European regions . Due to the delay of the game , Ready at Dawn offered a " special edition " version of the demo to pre @-@ order customers , with one Ready at Dawn developer stating that preparation of the special demo disc took up to 40 % of the team 's production time .

God of War : Chains of Olympus was originally scheduled to be released during the fourth quarter of 2007 , but it was rescheduled and released on March 4 , 2008 , in North America , March 27 in Australia , March 28 in Europe , and July 10 in Japan , where it was published by Capcom . The game was a commercial success , debuting at No. 5 on the North American charts with 340 @,@ 500 copies sold in the first month . The game was re @-@ released in Europe on October 17 , 2008 , as part of Sony 's Platinum Range and was also re @-@ released in Japan and North America in April 2009 under Capcom 's Best Price and Sony 's Greatest Hits labels , respectively . It became available for download from the PlayStation Store on September 30 , 2009 , in North America , October 1 in Europe , and November 11 , 2010 , in Japan . Sony released a limited @-@ edition bundle pack only in North America , on June 3 , 2008 . The pack included the game , a UMD of the 2007 film Superbad , a voucher for the PSP title Syphon Filter : Combat Ops , and a red edition of the console imprinted with an image of Kratos ' face on the rear . As of June 2012 , Chains of Olympus has sold more than 3 @.@ 2 million copies worldwide .

Together with God of War : Ghost of Sparta , the game was released for the PlayStation 3 as part of the God of War : Origins Collection ( called God of War Collection ? Volume II in Europe ) on September 13 , 2011 , in North America , September 16 in Europe , September 29 in Australia , and October 6 in Japan . The collection is a remastered port of both games to the PS3 hardware , with features including high @-@ definition resolution , stereoscopic 3D , anti @-@ aliased graphics locked at 60 frames per second , DualShock 3 vibration function , and PlayStation 3 Trophies . God of War : Origins Collection and full trials of its two games were also released for download on the PlayStation Store on September 13 , 2011 , in North America . By June 2012 , the collection had sold 711 @,@ 737 copies worldwide . On August 28 , 2012 , God of War Collection , God of War III

, and Origins Collection were released as part of the God of War Saga under Sony 's line of PlayStation Collections for the PlayStation 3 in North America .

= = Reception = =

God of War : Chains of Olympus received critical acclaim from reviewers and achieved the highest composite score for a PlayStation Portable title , scoring 91 out of 100 at Metacritic , who describe their score as " universal acclaim " , and 91 @. @ 06 % at GameRankings . The game was praised for its graphics and presentation . Matt Leone of 1UP claimed Chains of Olympus is " a technical showpiece for Sony , and arguably the best @-@ looking game on the system . " Robert Falcon of Modojo.com similarly praised the presentation , calling it " an absolute stunner , the pinnacle of PSP development " . He also praised the visuals as " absolutely breathtaking , " and that the " game moves beautifully throughout , with very little loss in detail or speed . " However , G4 's Jonathan Hunt said that it " occasionally suffers from screen tearing and framerate drops . "

Several reviewers praised Ready at Dawn 's solution for the controls and gameplay . Because the PlayStation 2 ( PS2 ) controller has two analog sticks and the PSP only has one , GamePro stated " the lack of a second analog stick could have been problematic but it 's not . " Modojo.com similarly stated that despite the lack of a second analog stick , " Kratos handles superbly on the PSP " and that the weapon and magic attacks are " mapped out perfectly around the PSP 's control set @-@ up . " IGN 's Chris Roper even claimed the control scheme " works better than on the PS2 . " Roper further claimed that Ready at Dawn " has done a stellar job of keeping Kratos ' move set intact , " stating that " combat is extremely responsive . " Matt Leone of 1UP similarly praised developers solution for the control scheme as well as the game 's " fantastic " pacing . However , GamePro criticized the relative lack of variety in enemies . The puzzles were criticized , and G4 claimed that some " are so maddeningly difficult to solve " , while GameSpot 's Aaron Thomas noted the lack of puzzles , claiming that it " could have used more " . GamePro also criticized the fact that " You still have to lug boxes around to solve environmental puzzles " . Kristan Reed of EuroGamer also criticized Ready at Dawn for cutting some puzzles , as well as cutting co @-@ op play , multiplayer , dialogue , and characters .

GameSpot and IGN criticized the short length and minimal boss fights , although GamePro stated that it has " the same epic feel " as the previous installments and claimed that if it was the only God of War title , " it would still stand on its own merits . " Cheat Code Central claimed Chains of Olympus is " one of the best games ever made for the PSP . " They claimed that it is " definitely a must @-@ buy game for all current fans " and that it " has everything you 've come to expect from God of War , just in a little disc and on a smaller screen . " GameTrailers went on to praise the replay value for being able to " bring your powered @-@ up methods of destruction with you . "

= = = Awards and accolades = = =

In IGN 's Best of 2008 Awards , Chains of Olympus received the awards for " Best PSP Action Game " , " Best Graphics Technology " , and " Best Use of Sound " . In GameSpot 's Best Games of 2008 , it received the " Readers ' Choice Award " . Diehard GameFAN awarded it " Best PSP Game " for 2008 . At the 2008 Spike Video Game Awards , it was a nominee for " Best Handheld Game " . It was Metacritic 's 2008 " PSP Game of the Year " . In September 2010 , GamePro named God of War : Chains of Olympus the best PSP game .