Mythology
Heroes

Trojan Warriors

Paris

Paris was the son of King Priam and Queen Hecuba of Troy, who eloped with Helen, queen of Sparta, thus causing the events that led to the Trojan War.

Before he was born, Hecuba saw a dream in which her child was a flaming torch. The explanation to the dream that was given by the seer Aesacus was that the yet unborn child would be the doom of Troy. Aesacus also said on the day of Paris' birth that a child born of royals that day should be killed in order to save the kingdom. However, Priam and Hecuba could not kill their baby son, and instead gave the baby to a herdsman so that he would do the deed. The herdsman, also unable to kill the baby, left him to die on Mount Ida, but the boy was saved by drinking milk from a female bear. When the herdsman returned nine days later, he found the baby still alive and took him back to Troy. While growing up, Paris met the nymph Oenone, and they became lovers; after he left her for Helen, Oenone told him that she would be happy to treat all of his injuries, small or serious, whenever he was wounded.

Years later, a magnificent ceremony took place on Mount Olympus for the marriage of Peleus and Thetis. Major and minor deities had been invited, except Eris, the goddess of strife. In retribution, Eris decided to cause havoc, by throwing the Golden Apple of Discord amidst the goddesses, which was inscribed with the words "To the fairest". Hera, Athena and Aphrodite started quarreling over who should get the apple, and asked Zeus to decide. The king of the gods, knowing that his decision would bring upon him the wrath of the two discontent goddesses that would not be picked, decided to abstain. Instead, he appointed Paris to be the judge.

Hector

Hector was a prince of Troy in Greek mythology, son of King Priam and Queen Hecuba. His wife was Andromache and they had a son, Scamandrius or Astyanax.

Hector was considered the greatest warrior of Troy, but he did not approve of the war that had started between the Greeks and the Trojans. During the Trojan War, he was the leader of the Trojan army. It was prophesied that the first Greek who would land on Trojan soil would die. Odysseus, cunning as he was, threw his shield on the soil and landed on it. Therefore, the next person who stepped off the ship was Protesilaus and was killed in a duel with Hector, fulfilling the prophecy.

Hector later proposed that a truce be called between the two sides, and a duel should decide the result of the war. Ajax was the Greek hero who stepped forward and dueled Hector. However, the duel ended in a stalemate after a whole day of fighting, and the two heroes exchanged gifts, admiring each other's strength and skills.

The last fight that Hector gave was against Achilles. However, when he saw Achilles and while he was ready to fight him, he suddenly was overcome with fear and started running. Achilles chased him, and Hector finally decided to battle his fear and stopped running, after seeing the goddess Athena in the form of his brother Deiphobus. Achilles threw a spear against Hector, who managed to evade it. However, when he turned to get a spear from his brother, he saw no one there, and realised that he was about to die. With the last amount of courage he had, he drew his sword; after a fierce duel between the two heroes, Hector died. Achilles, enraged that Hector had killed his friend Patroclus, then dragged Hector's body with his chariot, outside the Trojan gates for twelve days, before he finally accepted to give it to the Trojans, so they could bury him properly.
Mythology Heroes

Greek Warriors

Achilles

Achilles was a hero in Greek mythology and one of the main characters that participated in the Trojan War. He was also the protagonist of Homer’s epic, the Iliad. He was the son of Peleus, king of the Myrmidons, and Thetis, a nymph. Both Zeus and Poseidon were in love with Thetis, however Prometheus warned them of a prophecy that said the son of Thetis would be greater than his father; so, the two gods decided to withdraw, and Peleus ended up marrying her. When Achilles was born, his mother wanted to make him immortal and thus, dipped him in the river Styx. However, she did not realize that his heel, by which she held him, was not touched by the waters, and so that was the only part of his body that remained mortal. According to another version, Thetis covered Achilles’ body in ambrosia and put him on top of a fire to burn away his mortality; however, she was enraged because she was interrupted by Peleus and abandoned them.

When the Trojan War started, Achilles commanded 50 ships, each having 50 Myrmidons. He also appointed five commanders; Menesthius, Eudorus, Peisander, Phoenix and Alcimedon. After departing, they landed in Mysia by mistake, which was then ruled by Telephus. Telephus was wounded in the battle by Achilles, and could not be healed. After consulting an oracle, he was told that he who inflicted the wound would be able to heal it; so, Telephus asked Achilles to heal him, and in return he guided them to Troy.

The Iliad starts the narrative of the Trojan War with Agamemnon, leader of the Achaeans, having acquired a woman called Chryseis as his slave. Her father, being a priest of Apollo, begs the god to help him, and Apollo sends a plague among the Greeks. Calchas identifies the source of the problem and Agamemnon reluctantly consents; however, he demands that Achilles hand over his own prize, another woman called Briseis. Achilles, furious that he was dishonored in such a way, withdraws from battle and asks his mother to convince Zeus to help the Trojans, so that he may prove himself again in the battlefield. The Trojans manage to repel the Greeks back to the shore; Patroclus, Achilles’ friend, wearing Achilles’ armor, successfully leads the Myrmidons against the enemy, but is subsequently killed by Hector, the Trojan prince. Enraged by his friend’s death, Achilles joins the battle and tracks down Hector, whom he kills in a face to face duel. He then drags Hector’s lifeless body with his chariot during the funeral games he held for Patroclus.

The death of Achilles is not narrated in the Iliad, although it was predicted by Hector with his dying breath. Paris, the brother of Hector, managed to kill the hero with an arrow that landed on Achilles’ heel, the only vulnerable part of his body. The arrow was poisoned and some sources say that it was guided by the god Apollo. Achilles was cremated and his ashes were mingled with those of Patroclus.
Mythology Heroes

Menelaus

Menelaus was a king of Sparta in Greek mythology, husband of Helen. He was one of the main characters involved in the Trojan War. His parents were Atreus and Aerope, and his brother was Agamemnon who ruled over the city of Mycenae.

When Menelaus and Agamemnon were still young, their father clashed with his brother Thyestes, as to who would be the king of Mycenae. In the end, Thyestes emerged victorious, helped by his son Aegisthus who murdered Atreus. The murder of their father made Menelaus and Agamemnon flee from the city and seek refuge in the courts of nearby regions. Some time later, when they thought everything had been prepared for an attack, the two brothers returned to Mycenae, and helped by King Tyndareus of Sparta, dethroned Thyestes and Agamemnon became the new ruler.

Tyndareus had a step-daughter called Helen, and many suitors had arrived at the court of Sparta to ask her in marriage. They all offered gifts to Tyndareus, who did not accept any of them, nor did they drive them away, for fear of causing a diplomatic episode. The cunning Odysseus stepped in and told Tyndareus of his plan to solve the issue. All of the suitors had to give a vow to protect the future husband of Helen in any dispute, and they would then draw lots to determine the lucky person to marry her. So it happened and Menelaus drew the lucky straw. Menelaus and Helen got married and ascended to the throne of Sparta when Tyndareus and his wife Leda decided to step down. The couple had a daughter called Hermione, and some other accounts also mentioned three sons; Althiolas, Maraphius and Pleisthenes.

Later, during the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, the goddess of strife Eris, angry for not being invited, threw a golden apple with the inscription "to the fairest one" amidst the guests. Hera, Aphrodite, and Athena quarreled over who should get the apple and asked the prince of Troy, Paris, to be the judge. The three goddesses offered him glorious gifts, but in the end the prince gave the apple to Aphrodite, who had promised him the most beautiful woman in the world. Thus, Aphrodite helped him kidnap Helen (other versions say they eloped). Infuriated, Menelaus invoked the oath that had been taken by all the suitors of Helen, and assisted by his brother, set sail for Troy, thus setting in motion the events that culminated in the Trojan War.

After the end of the war, there are different versions of what happened when the couple reunited. They all say, though, that Menelaus initially wanted to kill Helen for leaving him for Paris; he changed his mind though when he saw her weeping in sorrow, or shredding her robes thus uncovering her beautiful body for him to see.

Once back in Sparta, the life of the couple was strained by the events of the war. Menelaus kept thinking of the lives lost during those years, while he also regretted that they did not have a male heir.