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THE ILIAD



THE ILIAD

Derleyen: Ali Güney Yakar

Troy: The Centre of the World

Troy, located on Hisarlık Tepe to the south of the Dardanelles Strait, was once regarded as the jewel of the Çanakkale region and of Anatolia as a whole. Indeed, it was said to be the centre of the world. The war which is said to have taken place in Troy 3200 years ago has been mythologised so much that it appears almost unmatched in the history of the world. Just imagine: a war that continued for ten years, in which gods, goddesses and tens of thousands of people faced off against each other, and all this because of a love story! In fact, we all know the name of this war: the Trojan War.

To summarise the legend, this was a ten-year war between the Trojans and the Achaeans, who wanted to capture the city of Troy. Neither side was able to gain superiority over the other. Towards the end of the war, the Achaeans came up with a trick that would enable them to capture the city. First, they built a horse made of wood. Then, hundreds of Achaean ships that had been anchored in the harbour of Troy retreated to somewhere where the Trojans could not see them. When the Trojans saw the Achaean ships leaving, they thought that they had won the war and believed that the wooden horse they left behind was a gift. They took the wooden horse to their city, which was surrounded by high walls. They had no idea that Achaean soldiers were hiding inside the wooden horse! Just when the Trojans were least expecting it, the Achaean soldiers crept out of their hiding place and opened up the gates of Troy. The Achaeans entered through the gates and seized the city. The Achaeans had been fighting for ten years, without ever managing to scale Troy's massive walls, but now the wooden horse helped them to get past the walls easily. They defeated the Trojans, who were caught off-guard by this trick, and the legendary city of Troy fell.

All of us are more or less familiar with the part of the story told so far. However, the legendary Trojan War and *The Iliad*, in which the war is depicted, consist of much more than the story of the wooden horse. If this were not the case, the Roman Empire would not have based its founding legend on Troy, Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror would not have visited the graves of the heroes mentioned in *The Iliad*, and century after century Troy would not have been the subject of plays, operas, poems, novels, comics, films and musicals. Indeed, hundreds of thousands of visitors would not come here every year from all over the world to see for themselves the Troy described in *The Iliad*.

Even today, wherever you go in the world, you are likely to see traces of the Trojan War. If you visit a museum in Asia, Europe or the USA, you may well see a statue of a hero described in *The Iliad* or a painting depicting the Trojan War, or whilst you're strolling down a street in a city somewhere, on a mural on the side of a building, you might spot an image of a scene from the Trojan War. Well, the Trojan War, whose traces can be seen all over the world, is believed to have been fought right next to where we are now, on Hisarlık Tepe in Çanakkale. This is precisely why Troy was once thought of as the centre of the whole world. Let us now take a look together at what may have happened just a few kilometres away but which for centuries affected the whole world.

Some Details that Will Make it Easier for Us to Understand the Legend of the Trojan War and *The Iliad*

The Iliad has been read by millions of people over the centuries. However, it is undeniable that many people who read the epic find it difficult to identify which people fought in the war, what period was being depicted and when the legend actually took place. They are not to blame though, because the saga is rather confusing. What we will learn now, though, will put us a few steps ahead of them on the way to really knowing about *The Iliad* and the Trojan War. When we go to Troy, where legend and fact meet, we will appreciate why we are so lucky to be able to have seen this city.

Homer

First, let's get to know the famous bard Homer, the author of *The Iliad*. Homer is believed to have lived in the 8th century BC, that is, about 2700–2800 years ago. Homer is thought to have been born in Izmir, formerly known as Smyrna. So, did the Trojan War take place during Homer's lifetime? Certainly not. The Trojan War is believed to have taken place 400 to 500 years before Homer was born, that is, around 3200 years ago.

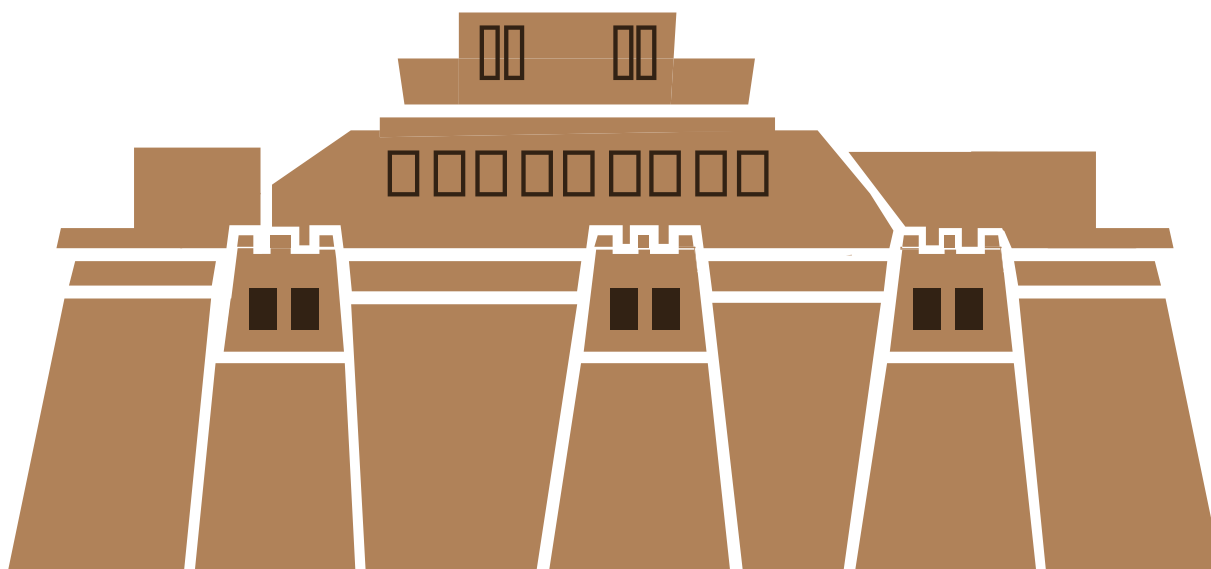
Given that *The Iliad* is made up of 24 chapters or books and a total of 16,000 lines, even if the war was nothing more than a legend, how could Homer have known so many details related to the Trojan War, which supposedly happened 500 years before him? The answer is very simple: he didn't in fact know all these details! Homer was neither the first nor the last bard to write about the Trojan War. What Homer did was to assemble stories and legends of the Trojan War that for centuries had been passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, it cannot really be claimed that the epic narrated a historical event that had happened. Or can it?



The City that Retains its Mystery

Today we do not have any conclusive evidence that what was described in the Homeric epics really happened. Nonetheless, when the amateur archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann discovered the city of Troy in 1871, he based his discovery on the epics *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. If the epics are nothing but fiction, how could Schliemann have found the location of Troy?

While we do not know for sure whether what was described in the epics actually happened, the landscape described by Homer is certainly real. For example, the modern-day counterparts of Mount Ida and the rivers Scamander and Simoeis mentioned in the epics are Kaz Dağı and the Karamenderes River and Dümrek Stream respectively. For this reason, while we cannot say that *The Iliad* is entirely true, we cannot write it off as completely imaginary either. Perhaps the most accurate conclusion is that in *The Iliad* and the city of Troy, myth and truth blend into one.



The Trojans and the Achaeans

We have already mentioned that the Trojan War depicted in *The Iliad* is believed to have taken place 3200 years ago. But who actually were the Trojans who featured in this epic, and who were the Achaeans who were trying to capture Troy?

Let's start with the Trojans. In about 1200 BC, that is, around 3200 years ago, there was a civilisation of Anatolian origin living in Troy. How do we know? The Hittites, who dominated most of Anatolia during this period, made frequent mention of the Trojans, the Hittites' western neighbours. In the Hittites' written texts, the city of Troy was referred to as Wiluša, and the city was mentioned in connection with another Anatolian civilization, the Luvians. What is more, architectural remains, pottery and similar artefacts that have emerged in archaeological research also indicate that at that time Troy was a typical Anatolian harbour city.

The Achaeans, who according to the epics fought against the Trojans, were in fact representatives of the Mycenaean civilisation. How do we know that? *The Iliad* presents in great detail where the Achaean kings and their armies who came to Troy set out from. Homer describes "the land of the Achaeans" as consisting of the Aegean islands and the territory of modern-day Greece. 3200 years ago, this area was inhabited by the Mycenaeans. (In fact, in other Hittite texts, the Achaeans were named Ahhiyawa.) All in all, it is generally accepted that the people referred to in *The Iliad* as Achaeans were most likely the Mycenaeans.

Nevertheless, as we have already emphasised, *The Iliad* presents a legend, not historical facts. We do not have any concrete evidence that the Trojan War actually took place. For this reason, although reality and myth may be intertwined in the saga of *The Iliad*, we should be careful not to confuse the two.

The Judgement of Paris: A Love Story Born of Jealousy

Now that we know who the two sides in the Trojan War were, let's find out why the war between the Trojans and the Achaeans actually happened.

According to the legend, it all started with the wedding of Peleus, the king of Phthia, and Thetis, the goddess of the sea. The wedding of Peleus and Thetis is such a special event that all the gods and goddesses are invited, except for just one: Eris, the goddess of discord. Because Eris creates trouble wherever she goes, she is not invited to Peleus and Thetis' wedding. Although the wedding gets underway without Eris, she finds a way of getting her own back for not having been invited. Eris goes along to the wedding, taking with her a golden apple on which is carved "to the fairest". She tosses this apple among the guests at Peleus' and Thetis' wedding. Because the golden apple has "to the fairest" written on it, the goddesses present at the wedding fight amongst themselves to get hold of the apple.

Three prominent goddesses are eager to get the golden apple: the goddess of marriage, **Hera**, the goddess of intelligence, wisdom and strategy, **Athena**, and the goddess of love and beauty, **Aphrodite**. Since the three goddesses cannot agree among themselves who should get the apple, they ask the father of the gods, **Zeus**, to decide. Zeus is the most powerful of all the gods, the maker of thunder in the heavens, but he does not want to decide which of the three goddesses is the most beautiful. After all, he is having to choose between his wife (Hera), his daughter (Athena), and the goddess of beauty, Aphrodite! No matter who he chooses, the result will not work out well for Zeus.

Announcing that he is not going to decide, he sends the three goddesses off to **Mount Ida**. Zeus mentions that on Mount Ida lives a shepherd by the name of **Paris**; Paris is a just man, and he will make the right choice. So, the goddesses go up to Mount Ida and find Paris. All of them promise things to Paris, hoping to get the golden apple from him. Hera promises Paris that he will become the only king of Asia and Europe; Athena vows to make him the most powerful warrior in the world, who will be able to eliminate the Achaean civilisation; Aphrodite promises to arrange for Paris the love of the world's most beautiful woman.

It is not difficult to guess which goddess Paris chooses! Paris himself is more attracted to the goal of love than to being a mighty king or a powerful warrior; **in addition, he makes a fair decision and chooses the most beautiful competitor, that is, Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty.**



But who is Paris, this shepherd up on Mount Ida? He is actually none other than Prince Paris, **the son of King Priam of Troy**. You will rightly ask what the legendary prince of Troy is doing shepherding up a mountain. The simple explanation for this is that the soothsayers of Troy had warned King Priam that his son Paris would be the reason for the demise of the city of Troy. This is why Priam expelled his son from the city, and Paris ended up spending his life as a shepherd on Mount Ida.

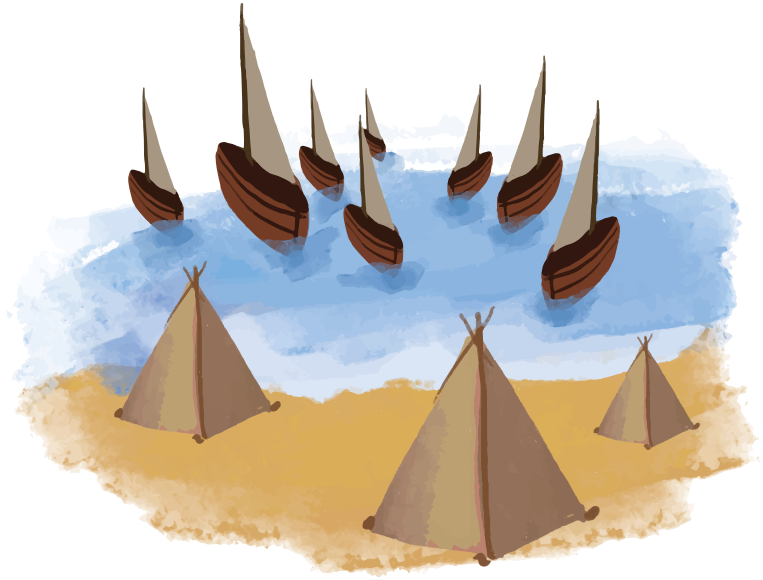
So, are you wondering which woman's love Aphrodite promised to Paris? The answer is Helen, wife of Menelaus, the king of Sparta. This is where things get complicated! King Menelaus of Sparta is the brother of Agamemnon, King Agamemnon being dominant over all the other Achaean kings. When Menelaus learns that Helen has fled to Troy together with Paris, he goes to his older brother Agamemnon and tells him that he wants to take revenge on Paris and the Trojans. Agamemnon gives the order to all the Achaean kings and armies under his command; over a thousand ships set sail for Troy. This, then, is how a love story led on to the Trojan War, which would last ten years and pit mortals, gods and goddesses against one another.

Does *The Iliad* tell the story of the judgement of Paris as well as the entire ten-year Trojan War?

Contrary to popular belief, it doesn't actually cover the whole of either story. The epic depicts **only 51 days** of this war, which lasted a whole ten years. It does mention many times, though, that the Trojan War broke out because Helen and Paris fled to Troy.

You probably have another question in mind: **Why didn't Homer write about the war from the beginning onwards?** As you may remember, we pointed out that for centuries the legend of the Trojan War had been passed down orally from generation to generation, and Homer was neither the first nor the last person to write about this war. For this reason, when talking about the War, Homer assumed that the reader or listener already knew about the legend of the judgement of Paris. **How -you may ask- do we know about the parts of the legendary Trojan War that are not featured in *The Iliad*?** Other ancient writers who lived after Homer, such as Sophocles, Euripides and Apollodorus, dealt with the judgement of Paris in their works. It is thanks to them that we are able to fill in the gaps in our knowledge of the legendary Trojan War.

THE ILIAD



Achilles' Anger

The Iliad begins at the base of the Achaean forces, in the harbour where hundreds of ships are anchored and on a beach housing thousands of tents. This is the place where, when they were not fighting, the Achaeans had eaten, slept, held meetings, and made decisions about the war. In other words, this is where they had lived for ten years. It is here that something happens that changes the course of the war.

An Achaean warrior, Achilles, summons all the kings, commanders and soldiers to the square. You may be wondering: who is this Achilles? Well, he is the son of the sea goddess Thetis and the king of Phthia, Peleus, whom we mentioned above when talking about their wedding. Achilles is the gods' favourite, the bravest, fastest and most powerful hero among all the Achaeans. Once everyone has gathered, Achilles tells them that the army has been severely weakened by an epidemic among the soldiers. He tells them that, if they fail to stop the epidemic, they will end up losing the war. Achilles suggests that they consult an oracle in order to understand where this epidemic has come from and why the gods are so angry.

Hearing Achilles' words, a soothsayer named Calchas gets to his feet. Calchas knows well what happened in the past, what is happening now and what the future holds. He tells Achilles that he knows the cause of the epidemic but is afraid that, if he reveals it, he will anger a man whom the Achaeans hold in high regard. Achilles recognises that the man Calchas is referring to is Agamemnon, the revered Mycenaean king and commander-in-chief of the Achaeans. He encourages Calchas not to be afraid to speak, reassuring him that no one will harm him. After this, the oracle Calchas explains why the epidemic arose: because of Agamemnon, the god Apollo is using an epidemic to punish the Achaeans.

But why should Apollo be punishing the Achaeans with an epidemic?

During the war, Agamemnon had taken a prisoner named Chryseis, the daughter of a priest named Chryses. Chryses was no ordinary person though; he was a priest of Apollo, the patron god of Troy. Desperate at having his daughter taken away and hoping to get her released, Chryses goes to the Achaean base loaded with gifts. He begs Agamemnon to accept the gifts he has brought and to release his daughter in return. However, Agamemnon ignores the pleas of the heart-stricken father and retorts that Chryseis will never be free; indeed, she will grow old in Troy, sharing his bed. Hearing this, Chryses begs Apollo, whom he has served his entire life, to take revenge on Agamemnon. Hearing Chryses' pleas, Apollo, the god of light, prophecy and the sun, agrees to fulfil the priest's wish. Using poisoned arrows, Apollo attacks the Achaeans and an epidemic breaks out among their soldiers. Agamemnon is the most powerful of all the Achaean kings, but even the most powerful kings should be careful not to anger the gods.

Achilles suggests that, to be free of the epidemic, Agamemnon should release the priest's daughter. Agamemnon, however, does not like what he is hearing. How dare Achilles give him an order! Offended by Achilles' speaking as if he is superior to him, Agamemnon starts to goad and insult Achilles.

Achilles, however, cannot control his anger when he hears what Agamemnon is saying. Although he is not superior to Agamemnon, Achilles fears no-one. He cries out that the Trojans had not actually done him any harm and that the Achaeans had only come to Troy because Agamemnon and Menelaus had asked them to do so. Achilles continues by complaining that, while he has been fighting bravely on the front line for years on end, Agamemnon has not once gone into combat. He steps up his insults. Ignoring Achilles' anger, Agamemnon humiliates him by saying that he doesn't need him. But he also goes further than that. He says that he will send Chryseis back to her father, but to replace her he will take Achilles' slave, Briseis!



When Achilles mentioned that the Achaeans had come to Troy for the sake of Agamemnon and Menelaus, he was referring to the events sparked by Paris and Helen's fleeing to Troy; Helen was, after all, the wife of Menelaus, king of Sparta.

Achilles accuses Agamemnon of dragging the Achaeans into war purely to avenge his brother Menelaus. This is why Achilles emphasises that the Trojans have not done him any harm and that this war is not his war.

Agamemnon has gone too far. And now there is not a single mortal who can prevent Achilles from raging even more. Just as Achilles is reaching for his sword to attack Agamemnon, suddenly someone stops him. This 'someone' who stops him is no ordinary being, let alone a person! It is the goddess Athena. Athena reveals that she has been sent by the goddess Hera to calm Achilles' temper. Now goddesses too have become caught up in this conflict!

Athena and Hera protect and watch over the Achaeans; they certainly don't want them to be fighting one another. This is why Athena had got Achilles to release his grip on his sword, telling him what would happen to Agamemnon and advising him to move away. She emphasises that, if he heeds her advice, he will be rewarded by the gods. Achilles listens to Athena's advice. Before making his exit, Achilles proclaims that one day the Achaeans will lose the war against Hector the Trojan and that the Achaeans will long for Achilles; on that day, Agamemnon will regret everything that he has done. After saying this, the bravest of all the Achaeans goes to where the ships are docked. Achilles knows very well that one should not defy the words of gods and goddesses.

Could Hera and Athena have a special reason for protecting the Achaeans?

The answer to this question is the same as the reason for the outbreak of the war: the legendary Judgement of Paris. By giving her the golden apple, Paris had bestowed great honour on Aphrodite. By doing this, though, he had also offended Hera and Athena. This is why, during the war, Aphrodite supports the Trojans while Hera and Athena protect and back the Achaeans.

Shortly after Achilles has exited, fuming, Agamemnon summons a group of soldiers. He orders them to go to grab Briseis and bring her before him. He adds that, if Achilles tries to stand in the way, he will assemble even more soldiers and go to get Briseis himself. The soldiers who go to Achilles' tent find him sitting half way between his tent and the ships. Although they want to tell him that they have come to get Briseis, their respect for Achilles leads them to not say a single word about this. They remain where they are, completely silent. Achilles, however, understands why the soldiers have come and can see the situation in which they find themselves. He tells the soldiers that this is not their fault, and he asks his best friend Patroclus to bring Briseis. Patroclus leads Briseis out of the tent. This is how the soldiers leave Achilles' tent, together with Briseis.

The Fate of Achilles and Thetis

Achilles obeys what the goddesses have said and holds back from attacking Agamemnon. Nonetheless, because of his anger he is like a volcano that is ready to explode at any moment. He cannot bear the fact that he has been humiliated by Agamemnon in front of all the Achaeans and had his slave Briseis taken away from him. He is furious but at the same time sad. Because of this, sitting on the shore he opens up his hands and starts to implore his mother, just like a helpless child. Hearing the voice of her son, **the sea-goddess Thetis** rises up over the water like smoke and comes to sit down next to Achilles.



She asks him why he is so upset, and he tells her everything he has been through.

What he really wants is for the father of the gods, Zeus, to praise his reputation as a warrior and for Agamemnon and the Achaeans to recognise his worth. To make this possible, it will help if the Trojans gain superiority during the war when Achilles is not involved in it. Achilles pleads to his mother to pass on this wish to Zeus. Hearing her son say this, Thetis cannot help crying. She says that Achilles is bound to live a very short life, for that is what his destiny is. Then she agrees to do what her son has requested. She also advises Achilles to keep out of the war altogether and just to stay close to the ships.

Several days after Thetis has left her son, she ascends from the sea into the sky; she is on her way to the home of the gods, to Mount Olympus, to the palace of Zeus, the caster of lightning bolts. Thetis finds Zeus, the father of the gods, sitting on the very highest peak of Mount Olympus. The sea-goddess sidles up to Zeus, kneels down before him and tells him what has happened to her son. She begs Zeus to allow Achilles' wish to be realised. She asks for the Trojans to gain the upper hand in the war so that the Achaeans can really appreciate Achilles' worth.

Do Achilles and Thetis really want the Achaeans to lose the war? Or have we missed something in the story?

No, the truth is that Achilles and Thetis don't want the Achaeans to lose the war entirely. They just want the Trojans to gain temporary superiority so that the Achaeans see how much they need Achilles and come to appreciate his worth. If the Achaeans lost the war, it would be impossible for Achilles to become famous.

Zeus, with his thunderbolts, agrees to fulfil Thetis' wish. Until the Achaeans come to appreciate Achilles' value, Zeus will grant the Trojans superior power. He is hesitant about this, though, because he knows very well that he and his wife Hera will fall out over this decision. And this is exactly what happens. Hera realises that Zeus is going to back the Trojans in accordance with Achilles' request, and she is not at all happy about this.

Crafty Odysseus, and a Dream that Doesn't Come True

Zeus immediately starts to put his plan into action. First he makes Agamemnon have a dream. In this dream, the Achaeans achieve a tremendous victory over the Trojans. When Agamemnon's excitement at this causes him to wake up, he is sure that the dream was a sign from Zeus. He tells his soldiers that Zeus has assured him that the Achaeans will be victorious, and he orders an attack on Troy. However, the mighty Agamemnon is unaware that Zeus, the father of the gods, has actually set a trap for him.

When they attack Troy, the Achaeans suffer such a severe defeat that almost everyone curses the endless war, which has been going on for ten years. Even Agamemnon loses faith that they will ever be able to win the war. Other than a handful of heroes, all the Achaeans just want to leave Troy and return home. What they forget, though, is that the fate of this war will be decided not by mortals but by gods and goddesses.

Hera, for example, has no intention of looking on and allowing the Trojans to win the war, and she has a plan for preventing this. Hera sends Athena to help the Achaeans. Athena descends from Mount Olympus and goes to where the Achaean ships are anchored. Disguised as a human, she mingles with the Achaeans and manages to find Odysseus.

Odysseus, if you didn't know, is a powerful warrior and the king of Ithaca. He is neither extraordinarily powerful like Achilles nor of noble stock, like Agamemnon. On the other hand, Odysseus is by far the wisest and most cunning of all the Achaeans. Athena reminds Odysseus that for years on end the Achaeans have been fighting in Troy for the sake of Helen. She tells him that it is not right for the soldiers to just disappear, and she advises Odysseus to speak to all of them one by one and convince them to stay in Troy.

As always, Odysseus takes a sensible approach and decides to confront Agamemnon rather than trying to speak to all of the troops. He knows that if he can convince Agamemnon in front of everyone, the Achaeans will remain in Troy. The shrewd Odysseus begins by stating that Agamemnon is not a coward but a mighty king. In saying this, he subtly provokes Agamemnon while appearing to spur him on. He continues by telling the Achaeans that they need to believe in themselves and that, if they remain in Troy, they will eventually win the war. After all, he assures them, they have the gods on their side. When they hear Odysseus' speech, the Achaeans' courage is restored, and they decide to stay in Troy, which fits in with Hera and Athena's plan.

Paris, Prince of Troy versus the Spartan King, Menelaus

Determined to stay in Troy, the Achaeans march down the battlefield, where they are met by the Trojans. The air echoes with the enthusiastic shouts of the Trojans, at the head of whom are Paris and Hector. **Hector is the Trojans' leader, a hero and a prince. He is the favourite son of Priam, King of Troy, as well as Paris' older brother. He is loved by every single one of the Trojans. But it is not just the Trojans who recognise his courage and heroism; the Achaeans value him too.**



While the soldiers of the two armies are sizing each other up, Menelaus' and Paris' eyes meet. Menelaus wants to take revenge on Paris, who has fled to Troy together with his wife Helen. Noticing the furious expression on Menelaus' face, Paris is scared and hides behind the Trojans. Seeing this, Hector gets angry with his brother. What enrages Hector is that he regards Paris as the reason why war has come to Troy. It is because of Helen and Paris that for the last ten years the innocent Trojans have not enjoyed a day of calm.

Hector goes up to his brother and starts scolding him. He asks Paris how he could create such trouble for their father King Priam, for his own brothers, and for the city and people of Troy. He says that for many years the Trojans have been fighting because of him and have endured great suffering; Paris, however, is afraid to fight and is a hypocrite. Paris concedes that what his brother says is true, but he reminds him that it was the goddess Aphrodite who made Helen fall in love with him. He defends himself by saying that mortals do not have the power to change the decisions of gods and goddesses.

Is Hector right to say that Paris was to blame for the outbreak of the Trojan War?

To answer this question, we need to understand fully the legend of the Judgement of Paris. First of all, it was not Paris who took the initiative to decide who was the most beautiful of the three goddesses; it was Zeus who decided that this choice should be made by Paris. Even though he is the most powerful of all the gods, Zeus was reluctant to make the choice himself, and preferred it to be made by Paris, who he believed to be a fair person. Since this was what Zeus and the goddesses wanted, Paris could do nothing other than pick a goddess. Leaving aside the promises that the goddesses made to Paris, he did make a fair choice. Among the three goddesses, he chose the most beautiful one, the goddess of love and beauty. As for Aphrodite, she stuck to her word and made the world's most beautiful woman, Helen, fall in love with Paris. Although Paris' choice did bring war, that was not his fault.

After talking with his brother Hector, Paris takes a decision. He tells his brother that he wants to have a duel with Menelaus, the winner of which will win the love of Helen. The war between the Trojans and the Achaeans will be over and the two peoples will remain friends. Hector is happy to hear this, because he does not want his people to suffer any more than they have. In any case, this war is not between the Achaeans and the Trojans but between Paris and Menelaus. On the battlefield, Hector announces his brother's proposal to both armies. The Achaeans accept it, but the deal has to be finalised in the presence of the gods. As for Menelaus, he argues that the agreement should involve not Paris but the Trojans' trustworthy king, Priam.

Priam is an old and wise king and hero, whose fame has spread far and wide. The father of Hector, Paris, Cassandra, Helenus and Deiphobus and husband to **Hecuba**, he traces his lineage as far back as Dardanus, the son of Zeus. In addition, Troy is known as the city of Priam, and the Trojans love him dearly.

The Trojans agree with the condition suggested by Menelaus. This is why an oath-taking ceremony takes place involving Priam, the king of Troy, and Agamemnon, king of the Achaeans. The agreement is consecrated and a truce is concluded. At long last, both sides are happy. The two brave warriors will battle it out, this damned war will be over, and the Trojans and the Achaeans will once more be friends.



Everyone gathers on the battlefield to watch the clash between Paris and Menelaus. The soldiers of the two armies form into rows and sit on the ground. The only person who does not want to watch the fight is King Priam. Like any father, old Priam loves his son Paris more than words can tell. Priam reveals that he will not be able to bear watching Paris fight for his life. This is why, once the oath-taking ceremony is over, Priam goes back behind the high walls of the mighty city of Troy.

Both armed to the hilt, Paris and Menelaus come face to face, and a savage fight between the two gets underway. The Trojans and Achaeans follow this battle with bated breath, because whoever wins it will win everything: not only will he earn the love of Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world, but also his name will be remembered for ever by both peoples. Paris tries his best to win the fight, but Menelaus, a strong warrior, prevails. Just when everyone thinks that Paris' end has come, something unexpected happens. At the very moment when Menelaus is about to take his revenge, Paris is enveloped in smoke and the Prince of Troy vanishes.

**Can you guess what happened to Paris and who helped him?
You'll get the answer soon!**

Everyone who sees this freezes in amazement. Paris, who had been fighting with Menelaus, simply vanishes into thin air! Menelaus darts forward and looks around in the crowd, trying to find Paris, but his efforts are in vain. This is because Paris is safe at home in Troy, behind those city walls. Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty, saw that Paris needed help and saved his life. Just as the goddesses Athena and Hera are looking out for the Achaeans, Aphrodite is doing her best to prevent the Trojans from being harmed. However, Aphrodite's saving Paris' life puts an end to the truce between the Achaeans and the Trojans.

While all this is happening, the beautiful Helen, in a high tower in majestic Troy, cannot rid herself of a feeling of guilt. She blames both herself and Paris for the suffering that the Trojans have been enduring for many years. Had she not fallen in love with Paris, the Trojan War and the disasters it has brought with it would never have happened. For this reason, Helen also feels great anger towards Aphrodite, who made her fall in love with Paris.

After saving Paris, Aphrodite dresses up as an old woman and goes to Helen to try to win her around. Aphrodite tells Helen that Paris is waiting for her in her bedroom and that this man, whose beauty is on a par with that of the gods, is a sight for sore eyes. When Helen hears what the old woman says, she can barely contain her excitement, but then she realises from the old woman's fiery eyes that she is in fact the goddess Aphrodite. Enraged, Helen asks Aphrodite why she has dragged her in to her shady conspiracies and pushes her to admit what her aim is. She wants to know why, just when her former husband Menelaus was about to defeat Paris and take her back home, Aphrodite had intervened and prevented this. Helen says that there is no way she will ever be able to win Paris back, and then she insults Aphrodite, remarking that if the goddess likes Paris so much, she could make him her husband or slave. Angry at these words, Aphrodite warns Helen that if she continues to be disrespectful, she will forget how much she loves Helen, and Helen will pay for her disrespect with her life. Intimidated by Aphrodite's anger, Helen does what she says and goes to Paris' house without anyone seeing her.

However, after entering the bedroom, the still furious Helen starts lashing out at Paris. She screams at him that she wishes not just that Paris would die but even that he should be killed by her ex-husband Menelaus. She tells Paris that she should never again attempt to challenge the mighty Menelaus. Paris, whose face is as attractive as that of any god, replies to Helen, but not with the fury she had displayed towards to him. He tells her not to lecture to him in this way and explains to her that it was because of Athena's intervention that Menelaus came out on top in their battle. Paris reminds her that some gods and goddesses are on the side of the Trojans, and perhaps one day with their help he will be able to defeat Menelaus. After this, Paris admits to Helen that he desires her more than ever, and they end up spending the night together. Paris, the Prince of Troy, is now safe in Troy, together with his beloved Helen. The ceasefire does not last long, and the war resumes due to the intervention of the gods.

Aeneas, the Master in Repelling the Enemy, and Diomedes, who Confronts Aphrodite

When the war resumes, the Achaeans (now led by Diomedes) gain the upper hand and advance rapidly on Troy. **With his powerful voice, Diomedes is the fearless king of Argos and Athena's favourite mortal. Like all the other Achaean kings, Diomedes is under the command of Agamemnon, and he poses at least as great a threat to the Trojans as does Achilles.** It is to stop Diomedes that Apollo, the patron god of Troy, becomes involved in the war.

Apollo disguises himself as a human and addresses the Trojans. He fires up the Trojans by reminding them that even the Achaeans' famous hero Achilles has withdrawn from the war. Hearing fiery-eyed Apollo's message, the Trojans, under Aeneas' command, charge forward to confront the Achaeans. **If you are wondering who Aeneas is, he is a master in repelling enemies, a tough, brave, powerful and fearless fighter. He is also the son of the goddess Aphrodite and of Anchises, a flawless member of the Trojan dynasty.** This is why the Trojans consider him their second leader after Hector.

As a member of the Trojan dynasty, is Aeneas related to Hector?

Well, they are distant cousins, but unlike King Priam's sons, including Hector and Paris, Aeneas is not a prince.



Under Aeneas' leadership, the Trojans try to stop the Achaeans' advance, and then the battle really heats up. To help the Achaeans, Athena also joins the battle. She goes up to Diomedes and lifts the veil from over his eyes that prevents him from recognising gods. Now that his eyes have been opened, Diomedes can easily make out who the gods and goddesses are that have disguised themselves as humans. Athena also assigns Diomedes another task: if he sees Aphrodite on the battlefield, he is to injure her. With all the power and backing that Diomedes now possesses, he is almost impossible to stop.

Diomedes has gained the support of Athena, but brave Aeneas, who is fighting hard to defend the Trojans, also has to protect his country and his people. When Aeneas spots Diomedes on the battlefield, he quickly directs his chariot towards him in an attempt to stop him. After all, as an expert at repelling enemies, Aeneas is no less fearless than Diomedes. The two heroes of these two enemy peoples are involved in an almighty collision. Eventually, Diomedes throws a large rock, which wounds Aeneas in the hip. Since Aeneas is the child of a goddess, though, it is not so easy to take his life.

As any mother would do, the goddess Aphrodite rushes forward to save her defenceless son, Aeneas. Because the veil over Diomedes' eyes has been lifted, he recognises straight away that this person helping Aeneas is actually the goddess Aphrodite. Remembering what Athena had instructed him to do, Diomedes wounds Aphrodite. In other words, a mortal stands up to a goddess and injures her. However, to enable her wounds to heal, Aphrodite ascends to Mount Olympus, where Zeus is located. As for Aeneas, he remains injured and defenceless.

You may ask: is it usual for mortals to stand up to gods and goddesses as Diomedes did?

Well, it is not common in mythology to find cases of mortals standing up to gods. Both the Achaeans and the Trojans are wary of disrespecting gods or goddesses and making them angry. What gives Diomedes the courage to stand up to Aphrodite is the fact that he is being supported by a powerful goddess, namely Athena.

Aeneas' Recovery and the Injury to Ares, God of War.

Now Apollo comes to the aid of Aphrodite's mortal son, Aeneas. Meanwhile, Diomedes is dizzy with power. Even though Diomedes can see that the god Apollo has come to help Aeneas, he continues to attack Aeneas relentlessly. Apollo manages to ward off all of Diomedes' attacks and, enraged, tells him not to try to take on a god. Seeing that his attacks come to nothing, Diomedes starts to be afraid of Apollo's anger and withdraws. To help Aeneas' wounds to heal, Apollo takes him to the holy sanctuary in Troy. Apollo, though, remains furious because Diomedes has wounded a goddess and disrespected him. Apollo goes to Ares, the god of war, and asks him to stop Diomedes, thereby helping the Trojans.

The enraged Ares disguises himself as a warrior and addresses the Trojan soldiers. He informs them that their leader Aeneas is wounded and inside the holy sanctuary and that the Trojans need to rescue him. Thus, even the god of war is among the many soldiers who are now caught up in the Trojan War. Having listened to Ares' address, the Trojans quickly march towards the sanctuary in the hope of saving their leader Aeneas. With Ares helping to strengthen the Trojans, the Achaeans now have little chance of standing up to the Trojans. When the Trojans eventually reach the temple, Aeneas, whose wounds have now healed, joins the ranks of the Trojan troops. Aeneas' wounds have been healed in the holy sanctuary by Artemis, the goddess of hunting and nature, as well as her mother Leto. Aeneas, who is now stronger than before, manages to defeat every Achaean that takes him on. While all this is happening, Prince Hector, who is leading the Trojan war-effort on another front, forces the Achaeans under Odysseus' command to retreat.

Who are the goddess Artemis and Leto, and why are they helping Aeneas?

Artemis, the goddess of hunting and nature, is Apollo's twin sister; Leto is their mother. Just like Apollo, the patron god of Troy, Artemis and Leto do not want the Trojans to be harmed, and this is why they heal Aeneas' wounds.



Recognising that the Trojans have gained the upper hand in the war, Athena and Hera join the fight on the side of the Achaeans. They both take the form of humans. Hera gives a speech that inspires the Achaeans, while Athena provokes Diomedes by asking why he is afraid of the Trojans. Diomedes replies that he is not afraid of the Trojans but that he has noticed Ares among them and is worried about disrespecting a god. Athena manages to build up Diomedes' courage, reminding him that as long as she is by his side, he will have nothing to fear.

Having benefited from Athena's support once again, Diomedes quickly advances on Ares, who now has the form of a human. Seeing Diomedes coming towards him, Ares steps forward to kill him, but then something unexpected happens. With the help of the goddess Athena, Diomedes manages to wound the god of war! To heal his wounds, Ares does the same as Aphrodite and ascends to Mount Olympus. Through the intervention of Athena and Hera, the course of the war has changed yet again.

Helenus' Advice, and the Trojan Women Who Make Offerings to Hecuba and Athena

With the help of these two goddesses, the Achaeans have managed to do more than just gain the upper hand. Diomedes, whom Athena has protected and nurtured, has instilled great fear in the Trojans. Even though the Trojans under the command of Hector and Aeneas continue to stand up to the Achaeans, these two leaders need a way to stop Diomedes. Just at this point, Helenus comes to Hector and Aeneas. **Helenus, the son of King Priam and brother to Paris and Hector, is both a powerful warrior and a soothsayer.** And because he's a soothsayer, he knows a way to stop Diomedes.

The mighty Helenus gives a speech. He starts by describing Hector and Aeneas as the greatest thinkers and fighters in Troy. He then advises them to make a speech to motivate the soldiers. Only in this way, he argues, will the Trojans find the strength to resist the Achaeans. Helenus continues by recommending that Hector and Aeneas' mother Hecuba, together with other old women, should make offerings to Athena. If Athena accepts the offerings of these Trojan women, she will stop protecting Diomedes. Heeding his brother's advice, Hector makes a speech that touches the hearts of the Trojan soldiers. He then leaves the battlefield and enters the city of Troy. Seeing that Hector has reached the western gate of the city, the Trojans announce the arrival of their prince. Hearing that Hector has arrived, the women rush towards the tower in the hope of getting news about their fathers, their husbands, their children and their relatives.

Reaching Troy, Hector goes to the house of his father Priam, where he encounters his mother Hecuba. He tells his mother that she and the other women need to go to the Temple of Athena and make offerings to Athena, to get her to stop Diomedes. Hecuba complies with her son's request, gathers with the other Trojan women, and together they go to the Temple of Athena. After the women have made their offering to Athena in the temple, they beg her to stop Diomedes.

Hector's Farewell to Andromache

Having spoken with his mother, Hector walks to the house of his brother Paris. When he arrives there, he finds his brother polishing his armour and shield. Together with Paris, he finds the beautiful Helen. When he sees Paris, the valiant Hector can barely control his rage. He launches into Paris, complaining that while the rest of the Trojan army is giving its all in fighting the Achaeans, Paris has locked himself away at home behind the magnificent walls of the city of Troy and is not doing anything for the war effort. Polishing his weapons, Paris concedes that his brother is right but begs Hector to listen to him. He says that for a long time he has been agonising because of what he has brought upon the Trojans, and he has wanted to be left alone for a while to deal with his pain. Now, though, Helen has convinced him to fight, and when Hector leaves the city, he will join him.

While Hector remains silent when Paris is speaking, Helen curses herself for the suffering she has inflicted upon the Trojans and Hector. Helen appreciates that Hector is bearing the lion's share of the burden for the war and for Troy. She asks him to sit down so that they can talk. Hector tells Helen that, although he knows she loves and respects him, he does not have time to sit down, since he needs to help the Trojans. He then leaves the house.

Why is it that, while Hector doesn't hold back in criticising his brother Paris, who brought this war upon Troy, he behaves so decently towards Helen?

The answer to this question lies in Hector's virtuous character. Although Helen was the reason for the outbreak of the war, she is alone, helpless and miserable in Troy. This is why, instead of blaming the helpless Helen and behaving badly towards her, Hector treats her with kindness and respect. He does not say a single bad word to her, acts in a friendly manner and stands up for Helen if someone is disrespectful towards her.

Hector is the prince and leader of the Trojans, but he is also a good husband and a father. For this reason, Hector is reluctant to leave Troy without seeing **his beloved wife Andromache and his son Astyanax**. He also doesn't know what fate has in store for him. Perhaps this will be the last time he sees his wife and child. But when he goes to his house to see Andromache, he doesn't find her there. He asks the maid where his wife is and finds out that she has gone up to the great castle of Troy. Since Andromache knows that the Achaeans have started to gain the upper hand in the war, she is worried for her husband Hector, whom she adores, and the Trojans. This is why she has gone to the great fortress of Troy, from where she can see what is happening in the war.

Hector loves Andromache dearly and wants to see her, even if it is for the last time. On the other hand, he has to return to the battlefield, to be with the soldiers he leads. His people need him no less than his wife and child do. Hector leaves his house quickly and returns to the western gate of Troy from which he will leave the city without having seeing his wife. At this very moment, he comes across Andromache and his son Astyanax, who is in the arms of his nanny.

Andromache grabs Hector's hand and tearfully begs him not to return to the war. She tells her that she would rather die than live without him. Andromache's love for Hector cannot be expressed in words. Andromache has already lost her father and her seven brothers in the war, all of them killed by Achilles, and Hector is all the young woman has left. He is the only thing left that she can rely on.



Having listened to Andromache, Hector says that he loves her more than anyone else and thinks about her more than he does anyone. He would rather be dead than see her suffer. On the other hand, he reminds her that he cannot run away from the war, that he has always fought on the front line and led his people and that his country needs him. He remarks that he has to do this for the happiness of his wife, his child and his people. After saying this, he feels the need to cuddle Astyanax, who is still being held by the nanny. Astyanax, though, is frightened by Hector's appearance and clings to the nanny. Realising that he is scaring his son, Hector takes off his helmet and puts it on the floor. He takes Astyanax in his arms and addresses the gods. He tells them that he hopes his son will turn out to be a better warrior than himself, and that in the future Astyanax's strength and power will be a source of pride to Andromache. He hands Astyanax back to Andromache and tells her that she should not be worried, since no-one's life will be taken away from them until their time comes. With tears in her eyes, Andromache says goodbye to Hector, as she holds Astyanax in her arms. As for Paris, the Prince of Troy catches up with his brother, as he had promised, and they meet by the western gate. The two brothers leave Troy to return to the battlefield.

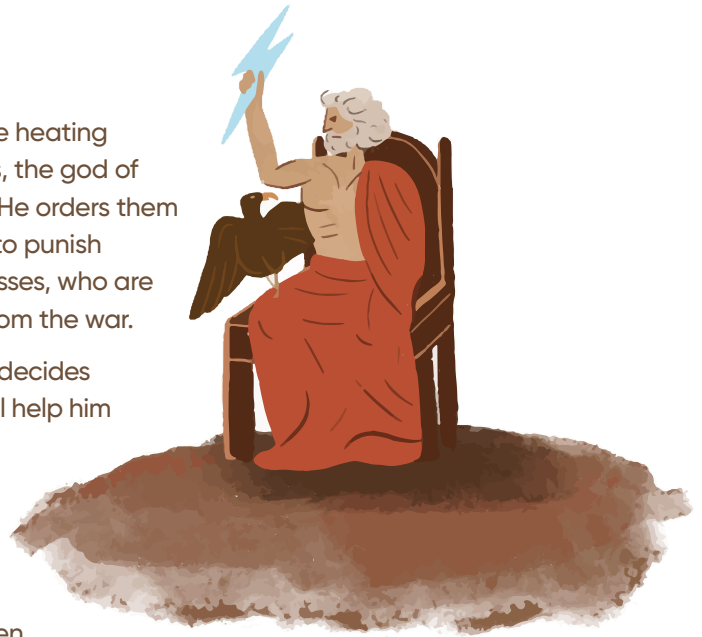
Mount Ida, the Scales of Fate, and Zeus, Father of the Gods

While war continues in the world of mortals, things are heating up too in the realm of the gods, Mount Olympus. Zeus, the god of lightning, calls together all the gods and goddesses. He orders them all to extricate themselves from the war, threatening to punish anyone who disobeys his order. The gods and goddesses, who are fearful of Zeus' power, might and anger, disengage from the war.

After the end of the meeting between the gods, Zeus decides to relocate from Mount Olympus to Mount Ida. This will help him manage the Trojan War more effectively and keep a close eye on events. The father of the gods puts on his golden garments and climbs into his chariot.

This chariot, moreover, is not simply a vehicle for use in war; it is being pulled along not by the horses of mortals but by winged horses. Zeus swings his golden whip, the winged horses take off, and within no time at all the god reaches Mount Ida in his magnificent vehicle. Sitting on the top of the mountain, Zeus places the scales of fate in front of him and watches the Trojans and Achaeans preparing for war. On one side, he places the fate of the Trojans, on the other that of the Achaeans, and the fate of the Achaeans weighs heavier. On this occasion, fate smiles upon the Trojans.

Empowered by Zeus and led by Hector, the Trojans launch an attack. Although the Trojans are outnumbered by the Achaeans, they are in good spirit. To strike fear into the Achaeans, Zeus starts firing lightning bolts at Mount Ida. Seeing the light from the falling lightning, the Achaeans realise that they are facing disaster. The Trojans put up such a fight that they manage to drive the Achaeans back to their base, where their ships are anchored. Now nothing can stand in the way of Hector. Wise Odysseus, Diomedes (the hero with the powerful voice) and the other Achaean warriors retreat. Hector sees Diomedes on the battlefield and challenges him to a duel. Although Diomedes initially considers taking up Hector's invitation, he then decides not to. He realises that the gods are on the side of Hector and that he therefore does not have a chance against him. Hector yells out that Diomedes is a coward for fleeing from a fight. The situation is very different now.



By boosting their power, is Zeus really helping the Trojans? Or does he have another aim?

In actual fact, although the Trojans gain supremacy in the war thanks to the backing of Zeus, Zeus' goal is not to help the Trojans. His main intention is to place the Achaeans in a helpless position with respect to the Trojans, so that they become dependent on Achilles. In this way, Zeus can force Agamemnon to ask forgiveness of Achilles and will ensure that Achilles returns to the war. Achilles' fame will be enhanced, which is precisely what Achilles had wished for.

The Achaean army is decimated by the Trojans' attack. But just when the Trojans are about to win the battle, it suddenly gets dark. At the very last moment, the Achaeans and their ships survive being wiped out. Having won a great victory, the Trojans hail the name of their leader, Hector. While this is happening on the Trojan side, Hera and Athena see the pathetic state of the Achaeans and beg Zeus to stop the Trojans. They plead that the Achaeans should not be suffering such a fate, but their efforts are in vain. Zeus informs them that Thetis' wish will be realised and that as long as Achilles is not involved in the war, the Achaeans will not win.

The Envoys Sent by Agamemnon to Achilles

The Trojan victory is so decisive that the Achaeans find themselves faced with the possibility that they will not just lose the war but be annihilated altogether. Whereas the Achaean armies had once relied on the high city walls of Troy, after the defeat they find themselves squeezed into an area between the vast sea and the wall protecting their base. This is why the commander-in-chief of the Achaeans, Agamemnon, summons the kings under his command to a meeting.

Agamemnon starts by stating that Zeus had promised to enable him to seize Troy but then this cruel god did not keep his word. He reminds those assembled that mortals cannot disobey the wishes of Zeus and that it is the gods who determine people's destiny. He admits to them that seizing Troy is now nothing but a dream and that they should go back to their homelands. Diomedes responds harshly to Agamemnon. He tells Agamemnon that, if he wants, he can board his own ships and sail back home; the rest of the Achaeans, though, will not return to their homelands until they have decimated Troy. The Achaeans are touched by Diomedes' stirring words. After the lush-voiced hero has spoken, Nestor gets to his feet.

Nestor is the oldest of the Achaean leaders and both **the king of Pylos** and an advisor to Agamemnon. At the same time, he is a hero whose knowledge, experience and courage everyone acknowledges. Nestor gives a calming speech, benefiting from all the knowledge and wisdom that age brings. Reminding the Achaeans that their enemy is right next to them, he says that tonight the army will be either saved or destroyed. He suggests that, while the army are eating, the younger soldiers should stand guard along the walls. The Achaeans listen to the advice given by old and respected Nestor, and everyone calms down. Meanwhile, Agamemnon hosts Nestor and the other Achaean elders in his tent.

While dining in Agamemnon's tent, old Nestor thinks carefully about what he can say to Agamemnon. He starts by stating that Agamemnon is a great king, a move which wins Agamemnon over. Then, however, he points out that the same Agamemnon had made a big mistake by humiliating Achilles in front of everyone and then taking Briseis away from him. After all, even the gods had accepted that Achilles was superior. Nestor argues that the Achaeans need Achilles in order to defeat the Trojans, and he advises Agamemnon to win Achilles over by sending him beautiful gifts. Agamemnon acknowledges that what the elderly Nestor has said is true. He has heeded the bad side of his heart and made a big mistake by taking Briseis away from Achilles. He recognises that, in the eyes of his armies, Achilles is a hero. He makes a public promise that he will give Briseis back to Achilles, while swearing that he himself has not been with Briseis. He promises to give him Briseis, other slave women and valuable gifts.

Following Nestor's advice, Agamemnon decides to send envoys to Achilles' hut. These messengers are Ajax and Odysseus the wise. **Ajax is the king of Salamis and the tallest, most muscular, and strongest of all the Achaean heroes.** Because of his majesty and power, he is also referred to as "the bulwark of the Achaeans". It is no coincidence that Agamemnon and Nestor select Odysseus and Ajax as ambassadors. While the former is the wisest of all the Achaeans, the latter is the strongest. Both of them, moreover, are warriors adored and respected by Achilles.

Following Agamemnon's order, Odysseus and Ajax go to Achilles' tent. When he sees his friends in front of him, the partly-divine Achilles is delighted and extends them a warm welcome. The wise Odysseus begins by thanking Achilles for his hospitality. He continues by reporting that the Achaeans have failed to stand up to the power of Hector of Troy and have suffered a crushing defeat. He tells Achilles that the Achaeans need him and that the Achaeans will only be able to defeat the Trojans if Achilles rejoins the war effort. He also assures Achilles that Agamemnon is eager to make up with him and that, if he accepts this offer, he will not just regain Briseis but also be presented more gold bullion than he can imagine, fast horses and other valuable gifts. He does not forget to mention that, if Achilles manages to capture Troy, Agamemnon will count him as his own son and allow him to marry one of his daughters. Odysseus then asks Achilles to accept Agamemnon's offer for the sake of the Achaeans. What the wise Odysseus does not know, though, is that Achilles' anger has not subsided.



On this point, would it be fair to say that Achilles' wish has been realised?

It would indeed. Because Achilles withdrew from the war, the Trojans came very close to defeating the Achaeans. Even Agamemnon, the most powerful king of the Achaeans, has been forced to recognise his own mistake and to appreciate how important Achilles is. To win Achilles back to the war effort, Agamemnon dispatches to him as ambassadors two very important kings, Odysseus and Ajax. In doing so, he conveys his respect to Achilles at the same time as trying to make up for his previous mistakes, with the help of the valuable gifts he offers. Of all the wishes that Achilles had expressed, just one still has to be realised: he has not yet gained fame as a warrior. For this, he needs to return to the war of his own free will.

Achilles talks about how he fought for Agamemnon for years, destroying cities and bringing armies to their knees. However, he tells Odysseus and Ajax that he no longer trusts Agamemnon, whose actions do not match his words. Achilles informs them that, even if he were given all the gold in the world, he would not accept Agamemnon's offer. He points out that, when he was involved in the war, the Trojans could not even leave their city; now, in contrast, they are advancing on the Achaean base. He goes on to say that Agamemnon has paid the price for having claimed that he does not need him and for displaying such disrespect towards him. Achilles is also keen to point out that, irrespective of what happens to him in battle, Zeus will continue to speak proudly of his fame. After Odysseus has spoken, Ajax tries to convince Achilles that the people need him, but his efforts are in vain. Once Achilles has rejected the offer made by Odysseus and Ajax, the two kings leave the tent. When the Achaeans hear that Achilles will not be returning to the war effort, they are overwhelmed with sadness.

Achilles rejects Agamemnon's offer, shuts his ears to Odysseus and Ajax's appeals and ignores the fact that the Achaeans need him. Which of Achilles' emotions and characteristics can account for his response?

His anger, selfishness and arrogance. Achilles' anger leads him to reject Agamemnon's peace offer out of hand. Even though Agamemnon is willing to make up for his wrongdoing, Achilles is determined that he should pay the price for disrespecting him. Because of his selfishness, all he cares about is that his own wishes are fulfilled, and he forgets that the population need him. As for his arrogance, it stems from his extraordinary confidence in his own power and his faith in the gods. Together, these make him think that he will gain fame in the war no matter what. Because of this, he ignores the appeals of his friends and fails to see that his wish has actually been realised.

Old Nestor Gets into Trouble with Patroclus

Even though his army is in a poor state, Agamemnon launches an offensive against the Trojans. The Achaeans initially manage to push the Trojans back, but this does not last long. After all, the Trojans have been boosted by the power Zeus has assigned them. Agamemnon is wounded in the course of the attack and, after that, Paris, the Prince of Troy, shoots Diomedes with an arrow. The Trojan warriors manage to wound both Odysseus and Ajax. All the brave Achaean heroes, whose leaders have been wounded, retreat quickly to their base.

The semi-divine Achilles looks on at the retreating, defeated Achaeans without doing anything. However, while watching the wounded being transported to the barracks, Achilles recognises one of these warriors. Achilles asks Patroclus to go to old Nestor's tent and find out who the injured soldier is. Patroclus is not just

a relative of Achilles but his best friend and trusted comrade. The two friends have been at each other's side throughout their lives, and not only during the Trojan War. They grew up together in the palace of Achilles' father, Peleus.

Patroclus goes to the tent of old Nestor and sees that the injured soldier is Machaon, whom Achilles also knows. Patroclus is about to leave the tent when it dawns on old Nestor that Patroclus has been sent by Achilles. Nestor starts to pour out his heart to Patroclus. Nestor complains that the Achaeans have lost the war against the Trojans.

Among the wounded, he laments, are the strong-voiced Diomedes, the wise Odysseus, and Ajax, the so-called "bulwark of the Achaeans". He pleads to Patroclus to talk to Achilles and convince him to return to the war, hoping that the advice of a friend will allay Achilles' anger.



The Serpent in the Eagle's Talon, and Poseidon, God of the Seas

Things are not looking at all good for the Achaeans. The Trojans, under the leadership of Hector, Aeneas and Paris, once again push the Achaeans back to their ships. Indeed, they go even further and smash a hole in the wall protecting the Achaean base. And this is at a time when Agamemnon, Odysseus, Ajax and Diomedes are all wounded. The Achaeans plead to the gods to help them but find it impossible to cope with Hector. Hector, who is fighting courageously on the front line, is sure that victory for the Trojans is in sight.

Just when the Trojans are in the process of annihilating the Achaean armies, an eagle suddenly appears in the sky. In its talons, the eagle is holding a big red snake, which is still alive. Continuing to struggle, the snake bends backwards and stings the eagle in the chest. The eagle lets go of the snake and, screeching, disappears into the sky. Seeing this, Hector's advisers interpret it as a sign from the gods and tell Hector that they should retreat. Replying that the Trojans are on the brink of winning the war, Hector, however, refuses to retreat.

Zeus, who is watching the battle from Mount Ida, is likewise sure that the Trojans will be victorious. He stops watching the battle and turns his gaze in another direction. Poseidon, god of seas, earthquakes and storms, cannot bear to see the Achaeans losing the war and surges out of the sea to come to their rescue. With Poseidon's intervention, the balance in the war shifts once again. Poseidon disguises himself as the soothsayer Calchas and goes to Ajax. He rouses him by saying that the Achaeans possess the power needed to stop Hector and the Trojans. He touches Ajax with his cane, which gives Ajax tremendous

strength. Ajax realises that the person he is speaking with is not Calchas but a god. His hands, in which he holds a spear, start to tremble, and he feels as if his feet have been lifted up off the ground. After urging the Achaean soldiers to resist, he finds himself pushed towards the front. Reminded of how well they can actually fight, the Achaeans begin to repel the Trojans.

Also following the battle is the goddess Hera. She is very glad to see that Poseidon is helping the Achaeans, but at the same time she is afraid. She remembers that her own husband Zeus had ordered all the gods and goddesses to keep out of the war, and she knows that Zeus will be very angry because Poseidon has defied this order. Her fears are justified. When he sees that his brother Poseidon is getting involved in the war, Zeus is furious. He blames not only Poseidon but also his own wife, Hera, who was likewise supporting the Achaeans.



Zeus' Plan and the Death of Patroclus

Zeus tells Hera about the plan he has devised, which will help Achilles' wishes come true. First of all, Zeus will send the god Apollo to boost Hector's power. Following their prince, Hector, the Trojans will then advance on the Achaean base. Then, Patroclus will join the battle in order to help his people, but he will be killed by Hector. Traumatized by losing his best friend, Achilles will finally decide to return to the war. Hera lends her support for this plan, and everything foreseen by Zeus, the firer of the lightning bolts, comes about.

Following an order from Zeus, Apollo, the god of light, boosts Hector's power, and now no one can withstand the prince of Troy. The Trojans, who have now gained an overwhelming advantage, are about to set fire to the Achaeans' ships. Patroclus rushes to Achilles' tent and informs him of the impending disaster. With tears in his eyes, Patroclus begs Achilles to return to the war. Achilles replies, however, that he has not yet heard from Zeus or from his mother, Thetis, and that he will only participate in the war if he receives news from the gods. Hearing this, Patroclus yells at Achilles that he has a heart of stone: he is watching what is happening without doing anything, and while he is waiting for news from the gods, his people desperately need him.

Is Patroclus so angry with Achilles just because he has not returned to the war?

No- Patroclus has realised something significant. He now understands that Achilles' refusal to rejoin the war is not only because he is furious at Agamemnon but also because he is so obsessed with gaining fame in the war. Patroclus calculates that, if Achilles joins the war without receiving word from Zeus, he will not be able to acquire the fame he is seeking. Patroclus now realises that Achilles cares more about the reputation he longs to have than he does about his people. And this is why he called him "stone-hearted".

Unable to convince Achilles, Patroclus nevertheless asks him for some weapons. He thinks that, if he girds himself with Achilles' weapons, the Trojans will mistake him for Achilles and be afraid. As a result of Patroclus' efforts at persuasion, Achilles appreciates that, for the Achaeans to avoid being wiped out, they have to push back the Trojans. Although he refuses to participate in the war himself, he hands over his weapons to Patroclus, but he asks Patroclus to return once the Trojans have retreated. When the Trojans see Patroclus, they presume that Achilles has returned to the war and start to retreat. Fighting like a god, Patroclus strikes down all the Trojans who launch themselves at him. Under Patroclus' leadership, the Achaeans advance rapidly, making it to the walls of Troy. However, the end of the hero is near.

Why had Achilles asked Patroclus to return after he had forced the Trojans to retreat?

Because Achilles loves and cares about Patroclus more than about anyone else. So that Patroclus would not come to any harm, Achilles had asked Patroclus to come back as soon as the Trojans had retreated.

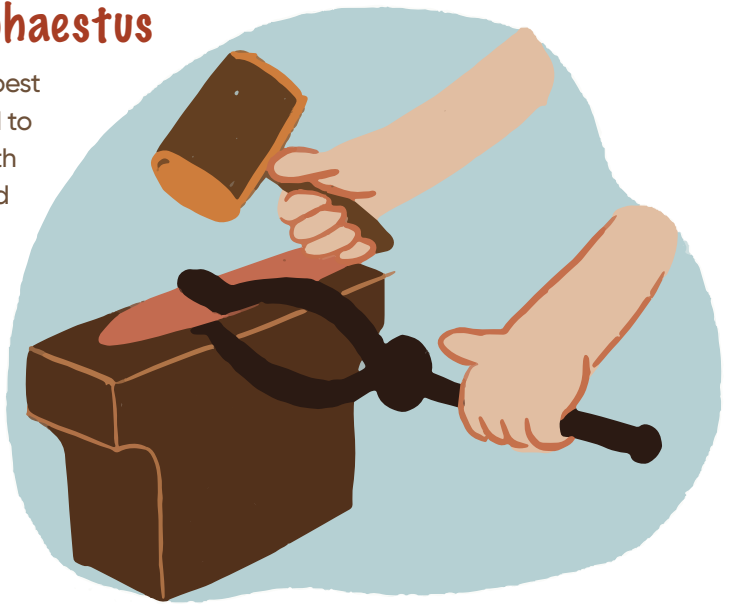
While the Trojans are trying to stop the Achaeans, Hector and Patroclus find themselves facing one another, and the two heroes start to fight. Hector, who is defending his country, tells Patroclus that as long as he is still breathing he will never allow the Achaeans to take over Troy. There then ensues a vicious combat and, with the help of the god Apollo, Hector takes Patroclus' life.

Could there be a reason why Patroclus is killed, and by Hector in particular?

As you will remember, Zeus enabled this to happen so that Achilles' wish could be realised. The only way for Achilles to gain fame in battle is for him to defeat a warrior who is as powerful and legendary as himself. In all of Troy, there is no hero apart from Hector who is legendary enough to bring fame upon Achilles. This is why Zeus arranged for Patroclus to be killed in combat with Hector, thus inciting Achilles against Hector.

Achilles' Remorse, and the New Weapons Made by the God Hephaestus

Achilles is devastated to learn of the death of his best friend. He is distraught because he hadn't listened to his friend and had sent him off to battle armed with his own weapons. He is distraught because he had cared more about his own wishes than anything else and because his best friend died due to his arrogance. But his wish has now been granted. Zeus has caused great problems for the Achaeans, making them suffer defeat after defeat and sealing the fate of Patroclus. It is true that Achilles has finally decided to return to the war, but his wish has ended up bringing him nothing but pain and sadness.



Unable to cope with his sorrow, Achilles is like a madman. He sinks to the ground, beats his chest, shouts, cries and screams. Sitting at the bottom of the sea, the goddess Thetis hears the cries of her son and she in turn wails with sorrow. The other sea goddesses gather around Thetis and ask her why she is upset. Thetis tells them what is wrong. Like any mother grieving for her child, she reveals that she is suffering because she cannot help her son, but then she decides to go to Achilles. The waves of the sea split into two, and Thetis comes ashore. She strokes the hair of Achilles, who is devastated by his sadness, and she reassures him that his wish has been realised. She asks him whether the Achaeans need him and why he is still sad.

Achilles tells her that, while his wish has come true, his best friend Patroclus has died. Now that he has lost his best friend, all he can do is despair at what has happened, asking why it should make any difference that his wish has been fulfilled. Achilles is furious with himself, and he knows that he is destined not to live for long, as his mother had warned. This is why he wants the gods to take his life. At the same time, another person is also the target of his anger: Hector, the Prince of Troy.

Achilles decides to return to the war to take revenge on Hector, but because he handed over his weapons to Patroclus, he needs new weapons. Thetis asks Hephaestus, the god of fire and iron, to forge new weapons for her son. Meanwhile, Achilles is weeping for the loss of his beloved Patroclus. Thetis delivers to Achilles the weapons that Hephaestus has made. She tells him to pull himself together and make peace with Agamemnon. Achilles girds the weapons that the god Hephaestus has created. No mortal has ever possessed such stunning weapons. Heeding his mother's advice, Achilles walks along the seashore and summons the Achaean warriors he encounters to a meeting. Everyone gathers: the wounded Diomedes, Odysseus and Agamemnon, followed by the entire Achaean army. Everyone's attention is focussed on Achilles.

Peace with Agamemnon and Advice from Odysseus

The Achaeans are eagerly waiting for Achilles to speak. He starts by addressing Agamemnon. Achilles declares that the quarrel between Agamemnon and himself has brought only pain to the Achaeans, and the time has come to put an end to it. After saying that, he announces to everyone that he is returning to the war. Having listened respectfully to Achilles' speech, Agamemnon acknowledges that he was wrong to disrespect him. He explains that Zeus had deceived him, and this was why he humiliated Achilles. Achilles is convinced by Agamemnon's message, and the two heroes make peace. The Achaeans express their delight that Achilles has returned, that this man who plants fear in the hearts of the Trojans has come back to fight shoulder to shoulder with his fellow countrymen.

But why does Agamemnon blame the gods for his previous wrongdoing, even though not a single god bore any responsibility for Agamemnon's humiliation of Achilles?

Doing this enables Agamemnon to announce his respect for Achilles from the very outset, and this in the presence of all the Achaeans. In this way, at the same time as winning over Achilles, he can evade responsibility, by shifting the blame onto the gods.

That said, despite the fact that Achilles makes peace with Agamemnon, his anger does not abate but is channelled in a different direction. A desire for revenge displaces his anger at Agamemnon, and this is why he wants to face Hector as soon as possible, the man who has taken his beloved Patroclus away from him. He asks Agamemnon to stir up the army and to order an attack on Troy. Odysseus, however, is aware that Achilles is driven by rage and objects to Achilles' suggestion.

Odysseus emphasises that the Achaeans have already fought hard enough and have suffered considerable losses. He goes on to say that the army are hungry, thirsty and war-weary. After emphasising that the Achaeans need to eat and get some rest, Odysseus advises Achilles to see to these needs in order that their side can recover. Because Odysseus knows fully well that the embittered Achilles rarely listens to what others say, he also tells the crowd that the gifts that Agamemnon had promised earlier should be given to Achilles. This is how the cunning Odysseus manages to get on the right side of Achilles. Achilles' first response to Odysseus is to say that his heart still aches with the pain caused by the death of Patroclus and that he has not been able to eat a single mouthful. Then he bellows out to Agamemnon that the gifts Agamemnon had mentioned are of no importance and that they should now be preparing for war. In response to this, Odysseus starts to speak once again.

Odysseus praises Achilles for being a far braver and stronger hero than himself. But he also makes a point of stating that he is older, more experienced and wiser than Achilles. He reminds the Achaeans that they should mourn for those they have lost, but to be able to resist the Trojans, they also need to eat and rest. He tries to get Achilles to understand that they will not be able to achieve victory if their army is weak. Odysseus feels the need to state this because, as a wise man, he is well aware that battles are won not by brute force and strength alone but by being clever and making the right decisions.

Eventually, Odysseus goes with soldiers to Agamemnon's hut, from which he takes gold bars and other valuable gifts and brings them to Achilles. More importantly, Odysseus brings back with him Briseis, who was the initial cause of the disagreement between Agamemnon and Achilles. In front of everyone, Agamemnon swears to the gods that he has not shared a bed with Briseis. After that, Achilles gets to his feet and reproaches Zeus, the father of the gods. He claims that the gods had actually wanted the disasters that had befallen the Achaeans to happen; had they not, Agamemnon would not have detained Briseis of his own free will. Reunited with his slave, Briseis, Achilles follows Odysseus' advice and tells the army that they should eat so that they can fight more effectively.

This, then, is how, thanks to his sharp wit, Odysseus makes it possible for Achilles to retake Briseis, regain respect in the eyes of the Achaeans and ensure that the advice he has given is heeded. As Odysseus had recommended, the army remains in its base, trying to gather its strength. Meanwhile, Achilles accepts the various gifts that come and, together with Briseis, continues to mourn the murder of Patroclus.

Aeneas' Fate and Achilles' Return

In the light of developments in the world of mortals, Zeus orders all the gods and goddesses to assemble. Poseidon, the god who uses his trident to create storms and earthquakes, asks Zeus why he has found it necessary to summon the gods. Zeus replies that Achilles has returned to the war, and that the end of Troy is in sight. After that, he adds that he will follow whatever happens from Mount Olympus and certainly enjoy the show. Now the gods are free to participate in the war, on whatever side they prefer.

Hearing what Zeus has said, the gods get involved in the war, joining the side of the people they want to win. Hera, Athena and Poseidon side with the Achaeans. They are joined by Hephaestus, as well as Hermes, the fastest of all the gods. Aphrodite, Apollo, Ares, Leto and Artemis back the Trojans, who are defending their own city. The River Scamander, which is actually a god, also stands by the Trojans. While watching the ensuing battle, Zeus fires down bolts of lightning. Poseidon makes the earth tremble by creating earthquakes with his trident. The gods and goddesses do not hold back from provoking one another by deploying their various powers. The war becomes fiercer than ever.

Returning to battle after a long break, Achilles defeats everyone he encounters in no time at all. Seeing this happen, the Trojans fear for their lives and start to retreat. Out on the battlefield, Achilles' anger has turned into a burning lust for revenge. After the death of his best friend, Patroclus, he has lost all sense of compassion. Meanwhile, the radiant Apollo approaches Aeneas on the battlefield and tries to incite him against Achilles. He reminds Aeneas that he is the son of an immortal, the goddess Aphrodite. Although Achilles is likewise the son of a goddess, Thetis, Apollo claims that Aphrodite is vastly superior to Thetis. For this reason, he argues, Aeneas is also superior to Achilles and should be able to stop him.

Although Apollo's words do have some effect on Aeneas, this Trojan leader knows in his heart that he will not be able to defeat Achilles. All the same, Aeneas is so brave that he's not afraid to risk his life in a war that he obviously can't win. His helmet shining in the sun, Aeneas marches towards Achilles. Two legendary heroes clash on the battlefield and launch insults at one another. Once their altercation ends, a physical struggle to the death takes over.

Aeneas puts up such a struggle that he even manages to unnerve Achilles, the Achaeans' most dangerous hero. All the same, it remains impossible for Aeneas to defeat Achilles, who is so adept at fighting. After all, Achilles is armed with the weapons wrought by Hephaestus and can bank on the support of Zeus. The fate of both heroes is unavoidable. Achilles will not die until he has gained fame through his exploits in Troy, and Aeneas does not have the power to change this fate.

Achilles attacks Aeneas like a true god of war, but he is unable to kill him, because –just like Aeneas– he lacks the power to change destiny. During the battle, something entirely unexpected happens: even though he is fighting on the side of the Achaeans, Poseidon ends up saving Aeneas' life. Using his powers, he rescues him from the battlefield and takes him to a safer place. Why does Poseidon do this? Because he knows what Aeneas' fate is supposed to be. Even when Troy has been destroyed, Aeneas will survive and go on to lead the Trojans as their future king.

After Poseidon has saved Aeneas' life, Achilles warns him not to cross his path again as long as he lives. Achilles concedes, though, that after he has died, there is not a single Achaean who will be able to match Aeneas' power. Just at this point, Achilles throws a spear, which disappears into a void. From this, the Achaean warrior recognises that it is the gods who have saved Aeneas.



Scamander the River God, and Achilles' Fear

Whereas the Trojans were once on the brink of victory, now their situation is not at all good. Achilles' return has strengthened the Achaeans and made their advance unstoppable. Some gods and goddesses are helping the Trojans, but there are also powerful gods protecting the Achaeans. Because of this, the efforts of Hector and Aeneas, who are fighting on the front line, are also in vain. The Trojans are forced to make a hasty retreat.

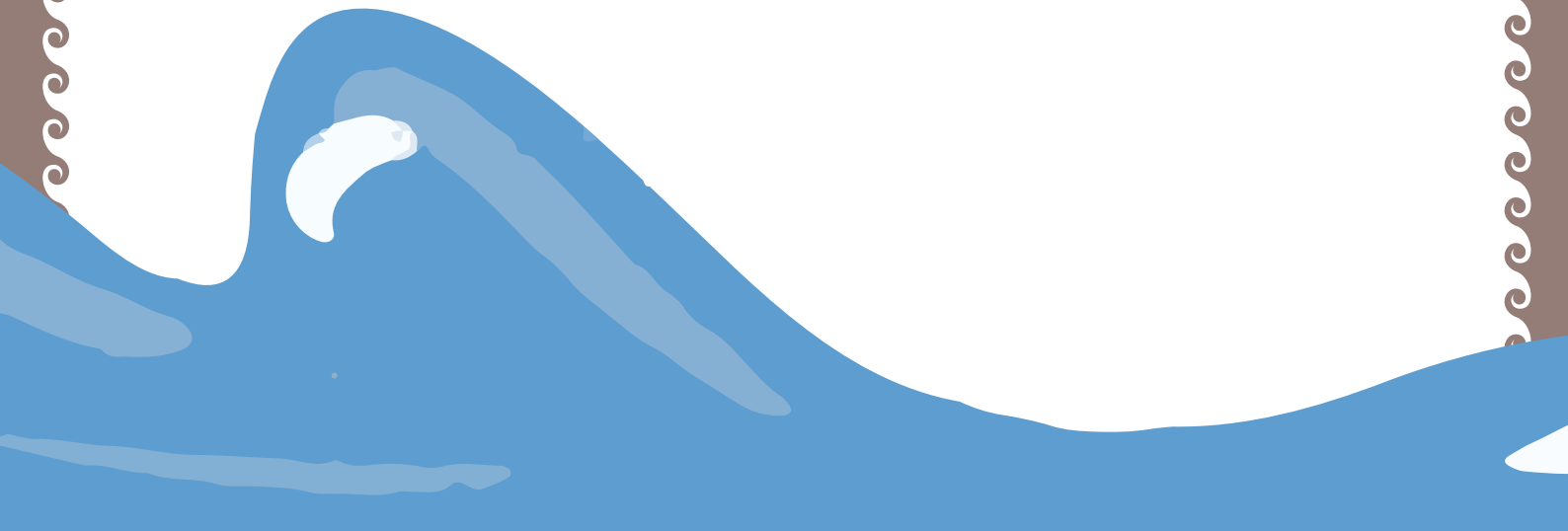
Achilles, the master warrior, is blinded by anger and chops down every Trojan he comes across. The Trojans he kills end up being thrown into the rivers Simoeis and Scamander. Faced with Achilles' might, the Trojans either flee or fight to the death. Every time Achilles kills a Trojan, he is reminded of his late friend Patroclus, and this spurs him to carry

on butchering. There is no mortal who can stop Achilles, who also benefits from the support of the gods. Achilles is well aware of his supremacy, but what he does not know is that he has enraged the river god Scamander, the protector of Troy.

Devastated by the fact that the local rivers are overflowing with dead and injured Trojans, the river god Scamander tells Achilles furiously to stop and to keep away from the rivers and the Trojans. The swift Achilles, however, replies that he will not stop until he has driven the Trojans back to the walls of their city. Then he hurls himself into the middle of the river Scamander. The river god Scamander becomes so furious at this that the rising waters of the river begin to beat Achilles. Shocked at what is happening to him, Achilles runs away.

But no matter how fast and strong Achilles is, when faced with the furious river god Scamander, he is helpless. Although Achilles contemplates rebelling, he does not dare to take on a deity. Terrified, he starts to beg Zeus to save him. He yells out that he does not want to lose his life in this way and that he needs the help of the gods. Meanwhile, the waters of the Scamander overflow and fill the plain of Troy, making it impossible for Achilles to move. Witnessing Achilles' desperate state, Hera sends her son Hephaestus to save him.

The god Hephaestus starts a fire, which dries up the plain. Following that, he sets fire to the waters of the Scamander, in the hope of rescuing Achilles. Now it is the river god Scamander's turn to be helpless, and he begs Hera's son to stop. Hera tells her son Hephaestus to put an end to the fires, and in this way Achilles is saved. Achilles, who has survived with the help and support of the gods, resumes his attack on the Trojans, and the Trojans have no choice but to retreat. The gates to the city open and the Trojans stream inside the city, protected by its immense walls.



The Only Trojan Left Outside the Walls: Brave Hector

Having won a great victory, the Achaean army advances on Troy. In his spectacular armour, Achilles shines like a star, standing out among the Achaeans. This time, Achilles is coming to avenge Patroclus, and the Achaeans are out to destroy Troy. From behind the city walls, old King Priam and Hecuba watch the impending disaster. Fortunately, they and their people are safe behind these walls. However, there is something that Priam does not know; Hector is waiting the other side of the wall in order to challenge Achilles. Like a god, Hector stands there alone, ready to take on the Achaean army and Achilles. As long as he is still alive, he will not allow his people to be harmed.



Spotting Hector in front of the walls, Priam and Hecuba realise that he is waiting to take on Achilles. As any parent who is worried about their child would do, they start pleading to Hector. With tears streaming from their eyes, they tell him that they could not bear losing him and that he needs to stay alive for Troy. They cry out that their family and Troy need him. And this is not the only thing that Priam and Hecuba tell Hector. They do their utmost to dissuade their brave son from fighting Achilles, but in vain. Hector has no intention of withdrawing.

Is this because Hector is not afraid of Achilles?

No- Hector is afraid of Achilles, though not as much as his compatriots. However, Hector's virtue and his sense of responsibility towards his people outstrip his fear. Even though he is not responsible for it, Hector blames himself for the suffering of his people. As the leader and prince of the Trojans, he knows that the right thing to do is to fight, not to run away. Having fought on the front line throughout his life, he doesn't want to be remembered as a coward. This is why he is ready to take on Achilles and sacrifice himself for his people.

Eventually, the two heroes come face to face. However, when brave Hector actually sees Achilles, who is being helped by the gods, he panics and starts running away from his opponent. Although Achilles chases him, he cannot catch up with Hector. Three times they run around the city of Troy. Their destiny, known only to the gods, is about to come true.

Zeus, the father of the gods, no longer cares about the fate of the Trojans, but he does love virtuous Hector and is upset by the situation in which Hector finds himself. So he wants to save Hector, and he asks the gods too whether or not they will save Hector. Athena, for one, retorts that Hector's destiny is certain and that he will not be able to escape from it. Even Zeus, the father of the gods, can do nothing for Hector. Zeus prepares the scales of fate. On one side he places Hector, on the other the goddesses of death, who stand for Achilles. Hector's side weighs heavier.

At this point, the goddess Athena comes down from Mount Olympus to help Achilles. Athena goes up to Achilles and tells him that they will defeat Hector together, so he can stop chasing him. Achilles is overjoyed to learn that the goddess has come to his aid and to hear from her that he will win the battle. He stops chasing Hector. After discussing with Achilles, Athena decides to deceive Hector. She disguises herself as Hector's brother Deiphobus and goes up to Hector. Exploiting her disguise, she tells

Hector that she has come to his aid and that together they will be able to defeat Achilles. Delighted to have Deiphobus by his side, Hector summons up his courage and resolves to stand up to Achilles.

Before the battle begins, Hector calls out to Achilles. He tells him that, although he is going to take him on, whoever wins this fight should display respect to the other. Consumed in a lust for revenge, Achilles turns down Hector's proposal outright. Lkening himself to a lion, Achilles asserts that it is impossible for a lion to come to an agreement with a human being.

After that, the two heroes embark on a vicious fight to the death. When Hector is unable to see his brother Deiphobus beside him, he realises that he has been deceived by the gods and that his time is up. This does not stop him, though, from fighting courageously. Thanks to the goddess Athena, though, none of Hector's attacks on Achilles come to anything. When the battle reaches its climax, Achilles kills Hector with the help of Athena.

Achilles' wish has come true: he has changed the course of the war and gained the reputation he has longed for. He has defeated the master warrior, the Trojan Prince Hector, known for his heroism, courage and virtue. Achilles' rage is so intense, though, that he has no qualms about showing contempt for Hector, whom even the gods respect. He pierces Hector's ankles and, by passing straps through them, ties Hector's lifeless body to a chariot. Whipping his horses, he drags Hector behind his chariot around the city walls of Troy. The beautiful face and body of the Prince of Troy, which had once struck fear into the Achaeans, are now caked in soil. Even this is not enough for Achilles. Having dragged Hector around the city in his chariot, so that everyone can see him, he now takes him to the Achaean base.

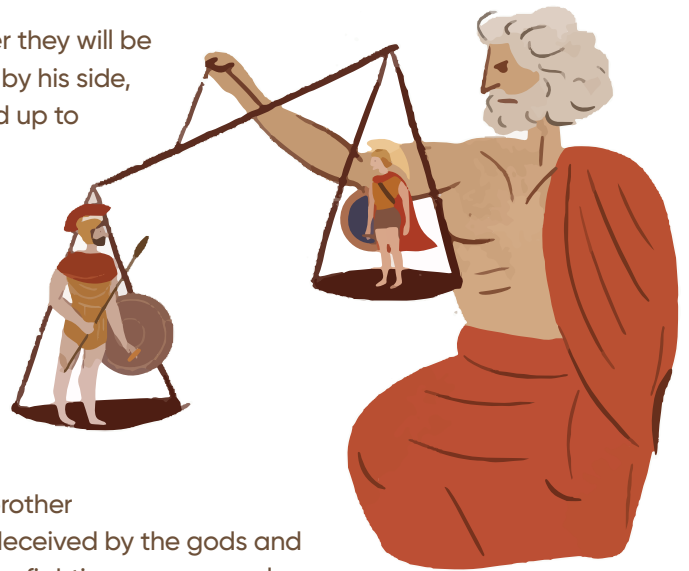
When Priam and Hecuba see their son being killed and his corpse being dragged along the ground, the bottom falls out of their world. Hecuba tears her hair out in sorrow, while Priam can do nothing but weep. Learning that she has lost her husband, Andromache sheds floods of tears. And it is not just Hector's family who are overcome by grief: the same applies to all the Trojans, who have lost their brave prince and virtuous leader. Hector, the protector of their country, is no more.

The Courage of Priam, the Funeral of Hector, and the Tears of Mourners

The feeling of revenge and anger within Achilles has given way to a profound sense of sadness. Although Achilles has defeated Hector, the pain in his heart has not subsided, because even if he manages to destroy Troy, this will not bring back his dear friend Patroclus. When all the Achaeans are resting, Achilles is unable to sleep a wink. He walks along the seashore, shedding tears as he thinks about the life he passed with Patroclus, the memories they shared, the sorrows they endured and the troubles they managed to overcome. On the other hand, no words can express the suffering of Priam, the king of Troy, and of Hecuba, Andromache and the Trojans. People on both sides have lost loved ones because of this awful war.

While the mortals are drowning in sadness, the gods are engaged in a fierce debate. Apollo, the patron god of Troy, is furious because of the disrespect that Achilles displayed towards Hector and doesn't hold back in expressing this to the other gods. He says that, because of Achilles, the Trojans are unable to mourn as they should be doing, and he asserts that a hero like Hector deserves a funeral. He reminds the other gods that Hector had never slighted a god and had lived a virtuous life. Apollo announces to the gods that, if Achilles continues to prevent Hector's funeral from being held, Achilles will not be able to escape from his wrath. Zeus agrees with what Apollo has said.

He summons Thetis to him and informs her that the gods are very angry with him because of what Achilles has done. He orders Achilles to return Hector's dead body to his father Priam. Thetis descends from

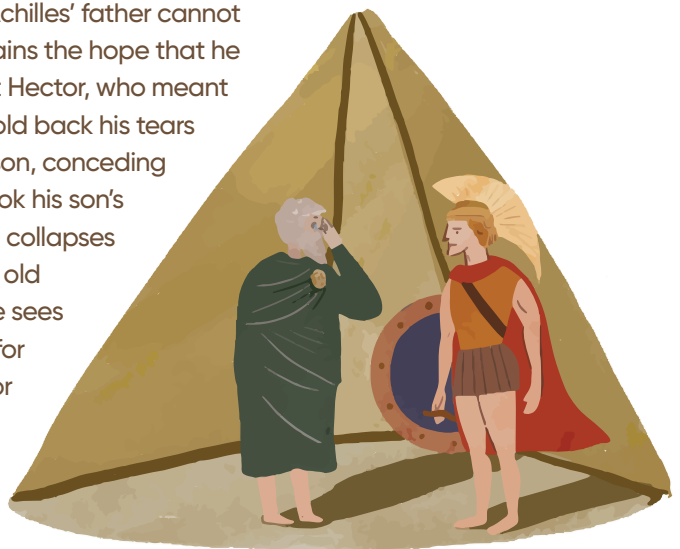


Olympus, goes to her son Achilles and conveys Zeus' order. Hearing what his mother says, Achilles agrees to return Hector to his father because he does not want to anger Zeus. In the meantime, the goddess Iris travels to King Priam in Troy to pass on the news she has received from Zeus. She tells him to go to the Achaean base when night falls, and Achilles will return Hector to him. Priam is happy to hear this, although his happiness is shrouded in bitterness. Iris tells the old man not to be afraid of death and that Hermes, the fastest of all the gods, will accompany him on this journey. She also makes the point of instructing Priam that, in order to get Hector back, he will need to present valuable gifts to Achilles.

Elderly Priam informs his wife Hecuba that he has heard from Zeus and that he will be going on his own to the Achaean headquarters in order to reclaim Hector. He asks his sons to prepare the impressive gifts he needs to give to Achilles in order to get Hector back. Hecuba is worried for the safety of her husband and tearfully begs Priam not to go to the Achaean base. Priam's reaction, though, is an anger brought on by sorrow. He cries out that he is not afraid of Achilles and that he wants to get his son back and give him the kind of send-off he deserves. Having lost Hector, the elderly man does not fear anything any more.

Equipped with valuable gifts, Priam sets off to the Achaean base. He is accompanied by Hermes, who is disguised as a human. Hermes guides him in such a way that Priam manages to reach the Achaean base unnoticed. Hermes then returns to Mount Olympus. After old Priam has reached the Achaean base, he sees Achilles' hut and enters it. Seeing the king of Troy in front of him, Achilles is astonished.

Priam asks Achilles to think of his own father. Even if Achilles' father cannot see him, at least he knows that he is alive and maintains the hope that he will return. Priam, however, has lost all hope, now that Hector, who meant more to him than anything else, is dead. Unable to hold back his tears while he speaks, old Priam asks Achilles to return his son, conceding that he is prepared to beg for this to the man who took his son's life away. Bereft of all power, the devastated old king collapses and begins to cry. Achilles is touched by the words of old Priam, who reminds him of his father, Peleus. When he sees Priam crying, Achilles also begins to shed tears both for his father, whom he has not seen for ten years, and for his dearly departed friend Patroclus. As a result of this war, people on both sides have lost their loved ones, leaving behind nothing but pain and tears.



After Achilles and Priam have been crying their eyes out for a long time, Achilles takes pity on Priam and helps him up. He tells the old man that he realises the pain that he is bearing in his heart and can see how brave he is. Achilles admits that he has brought great suffering upon Troy and Priam but he reminds Priam that neither he nor any other mortal can change the fate ordained by the gods. He tells Priam that his father Peleus was once happy but that he too will also be very sad in the future; Achilles' life will be short. Achilles bemoans the fact that, sadly, a person's life is made up of good and evil, happiness and sadness. He assures Priam that he will return Hector's body to him, and he tries to console the old man as much as he can. These two enemies who have lost their loved ones are now sharing their pain. Confronted with the meaninglessness of war, they shed tears together.

Now that his anger has subsided, Achilles shows Hector and Priam the respect they deserve. Achilles asks Priam how long they need for Hector's funeral. Priam answers that 11 days will be enough and, if necessary, they can return to fighting on the 12th day. Achilles accepts Priam's request, and a truce is declared between the two peoples for the duration of Hector's funeral. At sunrise, Priam takes back his son and sets off to the city of Troy. When Cassandra, looking down from a high hill, spots Priam coming, she spreads the word among the Trojans that her father has returned with the corpse of her brother Hector.

Priam is greeted tearfully by his loved ones, including Hector's mother Hecuba and Hector's wife Andromache. Together with the Trojans, they lament for Hector, emphasising how good, strong, brave, virtuous and altruistic he was. They are joined by Helen, who blames herself for the outbreak of the war

in the first place. Whereas Helen claims that she bears responsibility for Hector's death, she underlines that Hector never treated her badly, always protected him and didn't say a single bad word to her. Priam informs the Trojans that a truce has been arranged for Hector's funeral, and for 11 days the people of Troy observe the funeral of Prince Hector, their virtuous leader. This is where the saga ends.

You may wonder why the epic ends with the funeral of Hector, even though the protagonist in Homer's narrative is Achilles? From the Legend of Achilles to the Legend of Hector...

By ending his epic in this way, Homer helps us to appreciate what Hector's sacrifice means and reminds us again of what we have read about Hector. Hector is different from all the heroes described in *The Iliad*. Unlike Achilles and the other heroes, he is not interested in gaining fame in war. Nor does he need it; his heroism is legendary among both the Achaeans and the Trojans. He does everything he can to stop the war. It is Hector who informs both sides about the clash between Menelaus and Paris. Hector knows very well that not only the Trojans but also the Achaeans are tired and fed up of war. He just wants peace. Although his brother, Paris, is a prince, Hector does not hold back from criticising him for bringing war to Troy. He fights not because he wants to fight but because he has to fight.

He never runs away from a fight and always remains on the front line, side by side with his people. He even takes on Diomedes, who has wounded both Aphrodite and Ares. Although Hector is courageous and virtuous, he is concerned and worried for his family, his country and his people. He may be Troy's most fearless warrior, leader and prince, but when he is with his wife and child he does not hesitate to express openly how much he loves them, worries about them and is afraid of losing them. He feels responsible for the suffering of the Trojans not because of any personal guilt but because he feels the responsibility that comes with leadership, which eventually leads to him sacrificing his life. In the end, even the enraged Achilles concedes that it is right to conclude a truce and show respect for both Hector's funeral and the suffering of the Trojans. A war that has continued for many years is interrupted for 11 days, to leave time for Hector's funeral. While Hector's parents point out what a good, brave and selfless leader he was, Helen remembers him for his humanity. She is proud to say that he always behaved well towards her and protected her, and never had anything but good words to say to her. This is how the epic of *The Iliad* begins with Achilles' anger and ends with Achilles' anger subsiding; it is at the same time the saga of both Hector and Achilles.

Congratulations! Now you know the legend of the Trojan War as told in the epic *The Iliad*!

You're also familiar with the legends surrounding the Trojan War and with the world that Homer created through his sagas. *The Iliad* undoubtedly does have a very intense narrative. Most likely, Homer wanted his people to take away important lessons from the legends he recounted. The intensity of the narrative must be due partly to this intention of Homer and partly to Homer's literary talent. Even if we are very meticulous in our reading of this saga, with its multitude of events and names, it is quite natural if we stumble here and there. As has been mentioned already, although millions of people have read *The Iliad* numerous times, some important points have still been neglected. For this reason, it will make it easier for us to truly understand the legend if we return to those parts that have puzzled us and re-read these. Although *The Iliad* contains many names and events, we should not forget that Achilles' anger and Hector's self-sacrifice form the core of the narrative.

Are you wondering how the Trojan War ended and what happened to the important characters? The answer can be found in *The Odyssey*, also written by Homer!

How could you not wonder after reading all these pages! The *Odyssey* relates the story of Odysseus, the King of Ithaca, who survived the Trojan War, narrating his journey back to his country, Ithaca. When the Trojan War begins, Odysseus leaves behind his wife Penelope and his newborn son Telemachus, whom he will not see for another twenty years. This is because, like the Trojan War, Odysseus' journey back takes ten years. After the Trojan War has ended and Odysseus sets sail in his ships to return to his homeland, the gods cause problems not only for him but for all the Achaeans. During the ten-year journey, Odysseus is dragged from one land to the next, while the legend of the Trojan War is likewise spread to different territories, where it is recounted by talented bards.



While all this is happening, various figures who are eager to become the king of Ithaca want to marry Penelope, Odysseus' wife. However, because Penelope holds out hope for Odysseus' return, she keeps them waiting. Telemachus, now an adult, sets out by ship to find his father and bring him back. He visits elderly Nestor, who survived the Trojan War, as well as Menelaus. During his challenging journey, Odysseus travels to the Land of the Dead and talks to his friends who have lost their lives. From the stories told by Menelaus and Nestor, from Odysseus' conversations with his friends in the Land of the Dead, and from the ballads of the bards, it is possible to piece together how the Trojan War ended.

The Legends Surrounding the Trojan War, and the Fate of the People in these Legends, As Told in *The Odyssey*

The Trojan Horse and the Destruction of the City: After Hector's funeral, the Achaeans gain the upper hand in the renewed war, but they are still unable to seize Troy. As the war continues, the goddess Athena, who has backed the Achaeans throughout, gives them an idea that will help them win the war; she tells them to make a wooden horse. The Achaeans follow Athena's advice, and one Epeius builds a wooden horse, which the soldiers hide inside. Meanwhile, the rest of the Achaean army set fire to their tents, board their ships and

set sail. The Achaeans tow their ships from the shores of Troy to somewhere out of sight; they are aiming to make the Trojans believe that the Trojans have won the war.

When the Trojans reach the Achaean base, they see the burned-out tents and the wooden horse, and they think the Achaean ships have departed from Troy. They believe that they have won the war, but they also suspect that the wooden horse may be a trick. Although they consider throwing the wooden horse off a cliff and checking its interior by piercing it with a weapon, they eventually come to the conclusion that the wooden horse is a gift from the gods. They decide to take the wooden horse to their city, not knowing that there are soldiers hiding within it. In this way, by means of a trick, the Achaeans manage to surmount the walls of Troy that they have been trying to overcome for ten years. Just when the Trojans are unprepared for it, the soldiers sneak out of the horse and open the gates of the city. The Achaean army that enters through the gates of Troy brings destruction upon the city, and this is how the legendary city of Troy falls.

The Heroes we Know to be Hiding inside the Wooden Horse: Diomedes, Menelaus and Odysseus

Achilles in the Land of the Dead: The elderly Nestor, a survivor of the Trojan War, manages to return to his country of Pylos. There he describes to Telemachus how thoroughly he and Achilles had looted in Troy and tells him that the legendary Achilles died in Troy, where his funeral was also held. When Odysseus goes to the Land of the Dead, he encounters the spirits of Achilles, Ajax, Patroclus and Agamemnon. On seeing Achilles, Odysseus tells him not to be sad that he is dead, because he was happy when alive and the Achaeans regarded him as a god. The ghost of Achilles' response to Odysseus is that nothing one can say can make death any more beautiful, and that he would rather be a farmhand labouring for a poor farmer than a king in the Land of the Dead. Then, Achilles tries to find out from Odysseus what happened to his son Neoptolemus and whether he himself retained the reputation he had had before. Odysseus admits that, since he hasn't been able to return home for many years, he can't say whether the name Achilles remains on people's lips. What he can tell for sure, though, is that Neoptolemus has become a very strong warrior, that he was always on the front line in the Trojan War, and that he survived the war without even being wounded.

The Spirit of Agamemnon, and the Funeral and Tomb of Achilles: In the Land of the Dead, the souls of Agamemnon and Achilles are together. When Agamemnon talks with Achilles, he does not let on how he died, but he does state that he lost his life in Troy. Although Achilles does die, he recounts that the Achaeans went on fighting to the end. Shortly after Zeus created storms that brought a break in the war, Achilles' corpse was carried onto a ship, cleaned and cremated as part of a huge funeral ceremony. When Thetis and the other sea goddesses turned up at Achilles' funeral, the Achaean soldiers were scared and started running away. Old Nestor, however, assured the Achaeans that it was Achilles' mother Thetis who had come, which helped the troops to calm down. Achilles' bones were placed in a vessel together with those of his best friend, Patroclus, and a mound was constructed on top of these bones.

The Death of Agamemnon and Cassandra: Once the Trojan War is over, Agamemnon takes Cassandra, Priam's most beautiful daughter, as a concubine and returns to his country, Mycenae. Although Agamemnon has triumphed in Troy, what he does not know is that his wife Clytemnestra has set a trap for him. Prior to the outbreak of the Trojan War, a man named Aegisthus had been expelled from his country, Mycenae, by Agamemnon. After the war began, he returned to Mycenae. Aegisthus seduces Clytemnestra and has sex with her, and the two of them hatch a plan to kill Agamemnon. At a banquet held to celebrate Agamemnon's return, while everyone is eating, Aegisthus and Clytemnestra murder Agamemnon, who is wholly unprepared for such an attack, as well as Cassandra sitting next to him.

Odysseus and Ajax's Struggle for Achilles' Weapons: Odysseus recounts how, after he has met the spirits of Achilles and Agamemnon in the Land of the Dead, he encounters the spirit of Ajax. Odysseus notes that the spirit of Ajax does not speak to him because he is angry with him. The reason for this is that, after the death of Achilles in the Trojan War, a struggle took place between Odysseus and Ajax to inherit Achilles' weapons, which had been wrought by the god Hephaestus. The victor at that time had been Odysseus. Although Ajax's spirit refuses to speak to Odysseus, Odysseus tells Ajax that he was as sad about his death as he was about that of Achilles.

Menelaus' and Helen's Return to Sparta: Menelaus manages to survive the Trojan War and embarks on a journey which takes him eight years. He travels from Egypt to Cyprus and from Phoenicia to Abyssinia, before eventually reaching Sparta. After many years of war and endless struggles, Menelaus is finally

back in Sparta with Helen, after a break of eighteen years. When Telemachus visits them in Sparta, Helen immediately recognises him as the son of Odysseus. Helen and Menelaus tell Telemachus about their experiences with Odysseus in the Trojan War.

About Odysseus' Entrance into Troy in Disguise and Helen's Discovery of the Achaeans' Plans: Helen assures Telemachus that there is no end to the stories that one could tell about the heroism of his father, Odysseus, during the Trojan War. She does, though, share one truly unforgettable story. During the war, Odysseus made himself look bruised and battered by beating those parts of his body that were visible from the outside. He put on a torn garment and managed to get into Troy without anyone noticing. Helen was the only person to realise that this man disguised as a beggar was Odysseus. She helped him clean up and gave him some clean clothes. Then she asked him questions in order to find out about the Achaeans' plans. Odysseus, however, gave evasive answers. In response, Helen promised Odysseus that she would not tell anyone that he had come to Troy until he had actually returned to the Achaean base. Having received this assurance, Odysseus revealed the Achaean plans to Helen. Before leaving the city to return to base, he extracted information from some Trojans and killed them. While the women of Troy shed tears for their deceased countrymen, Helen admitted that she was not at all sorry about it. Despondently, she confided in Telemachus that she was only on the side of the Trojans because she was deceived by the goddess Aphrodite.

The Trojan Horse Trick was Almost Exposed by Helen

While Menelaus and Helen are sharing their experiences in the Trojan War with Telemachus, Menelaus reveals how, because of Helen, the soldiers inside the wooden horse were almost caught. After the Trojans had brought the wooden horse to the city, Helen rode around it three times together with Deiphobus, the son of King Priam. Helen called out to the men hiding in the horse, trying to imitate the voices of their wives. Just as Diomedes and Menelaus were about to answer Helen, Odysseus made them keep silent. The goddess Athena drove Helen away from the horse. This was how, at the very last moment, the Achaean trick avoided being exposed.



The Winner of the Trojan War

After a decade of war, the Achaeans manage to destroy Troy and gain victory, but in the process Achilles, Ajax and Agamemnon are killed. The spirit of Achilles tells Odysseus that he would rather be a farmhand serving a poor farmer than be dead. Menelaus, who survives the war, is able to return to Sparta after a gap of eighteen years, together with his wife Helen. As for Odysseus, during his journey back to Ithaca he comes close to dying countless times. He also tries to come to terms with the death of his friends and finds himself needing to fight once more in order to get his kingdom back. It will be exactly twenty years before he is finally reunited with his wife Penelope and their son Telemachus. All in all, judging from the two epics written by Homer, it is safe to say that no-one wins this war.

The Aeneid: The Story of the Hero who, in *The Iliad*, is Envisaged as the Future King of the Trojans

In *The Odyssey*, while Homer indicates what happened to almost all the legendary Achaean heroes after the war and how their stories ended, he leaves the fate of the Trojan heroes a mystery. That said, although Homer does not answer the question of what happened to the Trojans after the war, he does point out in *The Iliad* that the Trojans and the dynasty of Trojan kings do not end there. As you may remember, in *The Iliad*, the god Poseidon saves Aeneas' life, despite the fact that during the Trojan War he had been very much on the side of the Achaeans. Poseidon also prophesies that Aeneas will be the future king and leader of the Trojans. Homer's unfinished legend *The Aeneid* was completed around 700 years later, by the famous Roman poet Publius Vergilius Maro (Virgil), who lived between 70 BC and 19 AD.

The Aeneid: A Legend Stretching from Troy to the Roman Empire

The Aeneid tells the story of a group of people who set out to sea in the hope of finding a new homeland. These include Aeneas, who survived the Trojan War, his son Ascanius, his father Anchises, and those other Trojans who also survived the War. Led by Aeneas, the Trojans manage to cross the Aegean and Ionian Seas and reach Sicily, but Anchises dies during this voyage. As a result of a storm in Sicily, Aeneas and the Trojans are blown off course and end up landing on the coast of Carthage. The Queen of Carthage, Dido, welcomes the Trojans. Since the legend of the Trojan War has spread far and wide, she is also interested in finding out from Aeneas what happened in the war. Aeneas describes the destruction of the city of Troy and explains how he himself survived. Before long, Dido falls in love with Aeneas, and the leaders of these two peoples end up making love.

The Trojans are looked after well in Carthage, but the gods tell Aeneas that he cannot stay in Carthage; the territory has fallen under the control of Ascanius, the son of the king of Italy and of the Roman territories. For this reason, say the gods, Aeneas and his companions need to found a new Troy. Aeneas resolves to follow the orders of the gods and leaves Carthage, together with his son Ascanius and the Trojans. After a long journey, they reach the area of Latium in Italy (Latium: the region bordered by the River Arno to the north, the River Tiber to the south, the Apennine Mountains to the east and the Tyrrhenian Sea to the west, where the city of Rome was founded.). Latinus, the king of Latium, wants his daughter Lavinia to marry Aeneas, a wish with which the gods also concur. However, Lavinia cannot marry Aeneas because she is engaged to Turnus, king of the Rutuli (an ancient people living in the region of Latium in Italy) in Latium. Defying the will of both Latinus and the gods, Turnus goes to war against the Trojans. After the war, Aeneas and Turnus engage in a fight to the death to determine who will gain Lavinia. Turnus is defeated and concedes that Lavinia will become the wife of Aeneas. Aeneas, however, takes the life of Turnus, who caused the start of the war and has been responsible for many deaths. This is where the saga ends.

According to the legend written by Virgil, Aeneas founds a city of Lavinium, named after his wife Lavinia, while Ascanius establishes a city called Alba. Romulus, the founder of the city of Rome, is said to have been a descendant of Aeneas. The epic also mentions that, many centuries later, the empire whose foundations had been laid by Aeneas would be ruled by the Emperor Augustus. During this period, moreover, Rome would enjoy its golden age. By combining these elements, Virgil intertwines legend and historical fact. The Roman emperor Augustus, who lived between 63 BC and 14 AD, claimed that his ancestry could be traced back to Aeneas. Through this claim, the legend of the founding of the Roman Empire is linked to the legend of the Trojan War.



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