

# APOLLODORUS

(probably 1st or 2nd c. AD, wrote in Greek)

*The Library (Bibliothēke) is a mythological work attributed to Apollodorus (sometimes he is called Pseudo-Apollodorus because our author is certainly not the famous scholar Apollodorus, who had written a work on the gods in the 2nd century BC). The work is essentially a basic handbook of Greek myth that was probably compiled sometime during the first two centuries AD. It is organized by lineage: the first book covers the gods and the family of Deucalion; the second the lineage of Inachos; the third the lineage of Agenor. The last section of the work is missing (it breaks off in the middle of the accounts of Theseus), but we have an epitome (an abridged version), which covers the remainder of the tale of Theseus and the events surrounding the Trojan War. The Library is a valuable source for modern students of myth both for its usually clear narration and for the amount of material in it that is derived from earlier writers, including such important mythographers as Acusilaus and Pherecydes. One difficulty caused by this is the presence of sometimes conflicting pieces of information where Apollodorus follows or reports different authorities. Included here are extended excerpts of the Library, mostly centered on creation and the major heroes.*

## FROM LIBRARY

### A1 The Early Gods, the Rise of Zeus, and the Titanomachy (1.1.1–1.2.6)

[1.1] Ouranos was the first to rule the entire cosmos. Having married Ge, he first fathered the ones called “Hundred-Handers,” namely Briareos, Gyes, and Cottos, who stood unsurpassed in size and power, each with a hundred hands and each with fifty heads. After them Ge bore him the Cyclopes, namely Arges, Steropes, and Brontes, and each of them had a single eye on his forehead. But Ouranos bound them and threw them into Tartaros (this is a gloomy place in the house of Hades that is as far away from Ge as Ge is from Ouranos). Then he had more children with Ge—sons who were called the Titans, namely Oceanos, Coios, Hyperion, Creios, Iapetos, and, youngest of them all, Cronos; and also daughters, called the Titanesses, namely Tethys, Rhea, Themis, Mnemosyne, Phoibe, Dione, and Theia.

Ge grew angry at the destruction of her children who had been thrown into Tartaros. She persuaded the Titans to attack their father and gave an adamantine sickle to Cronos. And, except for Oceanos, they attacked him, and Cronos cut off his father’s genitals and threw them into the sea. From the drops of flowing blood the Erinyes were born, Alecto, Tisiphone, and Megaira. Having removed Ouranos from power, the Titans brought up their brothers who had been thrown down into Tartaros and entrusted the kingship to Cronos.

But he again bound the Hundred-Handers and Cyclopes and shut them up in Tartaros. He married his sister Rhea, and since Ge and Ouranos told him in a prophecy that he would be deposed from power by his own child, he swallowed his children as they were born. He swallowed the firstborn Hestia, then Demeter and Hera, and after them Plouton and Poseidon. Rhea grew angry at what he had done, and when it happened that her belly was swollen with Zeus, she went to Crete. She gave birth to Zeus in a cave on Mount Dicte. And she gave him to the Couretes and to the daughters of Melisseus, the Nymphs Adrasteia and Ida, to raise. These same Nymphs raised the child on the milk of Amaltheia, and the Couretes, wearing armor, stood guard over the infant in the cave and banged their shields with their spears so that Cronos would not hear the sound of his child. Rhea wrapped a stone in swaddling clothes and gave it to Cronos to swallow as if it were their newborn child.

## A2 The Titanomachy

[1.2] When Zeus became an adult, he took Metis daughter of Oceanos as his accomplice, and she gave Cronos a drug to swallow. Under its influence he was forced first to vomit up the stone, then the children that he had swallowed. Along with them Zeus fought the war against Cronos and the Titans. They had been fighting for ten years when Ge foretold that Zeus would be victorious if he took as allies those who had been thrown into Tartaros. He killed Campe, who guarded them, and loosed their bindings. And then the Cyclopes gave Zeus thunder, lightning, and the thunderbolt; they gave Hades a helmet; and they gave Poseidon a trident. Armed with these weapons, they defeated the Titans, threw them into Tartaros and set the Hundred-Handers to guard them. As for themselves, they cast lots for dominion, and Zeus received power in the sky, Poseidon power in the sea, and Plouton power in the house of Hades.

The Titans had offspring. Oceanos and Tethys had the Oceanids: Asia, Styx, Electra, Doris, Eurynome, Amphitrite, and Metis. Coios and Phoibe had Asteria and Leto. Hyperion and Theia had Eos, Helios, and Selene. Creios and Eurybia daughter of Pontos had Astraios, Pallas, and Perses. Iapetos and Asia had Atlas, who holds the sky on his shoulders, Prometheus, Epimetheus, and Menoitios, whom Zeus threw down into Tartaros after striking him with a thunderbolt during the Titanomachy. Cronos and Philyra had Cheiron, a Centaur of double form. Eos and Astraios had the Winds and Stars. Perses and Asteria had Hecate. Pallas and Styx had Nike, Cratos, Zelos, and Bia. And Zeus gave the water of Styx, which flows from a rock in Hades, the power to bind oaths. He gave her this honor as a reward for her joining, along with her children, his fight against the Titans.

Pontos and Ge had Phorcos, Thaumas, Nereus, Eurybia, and Ceto. Thaumas and Electra then had Iris and the Harpies (named Aello and Ocypete). Phorcos and Ceto had the Phorcides and the Gorgons, whom we will discuss when we tell the story of Perseus. Nereus and Doris had the Nereids, whose names are Cymothoe, Speio, Glauconome, Nausithoe, Halie, Erato, Sao, Amphitrite, Eunice, Thetis, Eulimene, Agaue, Eudora, Doto, Pherousa, Galateia, Actaia, Pontomedousa, Hippothoe, Lysianassa, Cymo, Eione, Halimede, Plexaure, Eucrante, Proto, Calypso, Panope, Cranto, Neomeris, Hipponoe, Ianeira, Polynome, Autonoe, Melite, Dione, Nesaia, Dero, Euagore, Psamathe, Eumolpe, Ione, Dynamene, Ceto, and Limnoreia.

## **B1 The Children of Zeus, Other Genealogies and Tales (1.3.1–1.4.5)**

[1.3] Zeus married Hera and fathered Hebe, Eileithyia, and Ares, but he had intercourse with many mortal and immortal women. Now, by Themis daughter of Ouranos he had daughters, first the Horai, namely Eirene, Eunomia, and Dike, then the Moirai, namely Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos. By Dione he had Aphrodite. By Eurynome daughter of Oceanos he had the Charites, namely Aglaia, Euphrosyne, and Thaleia. By Styx he had Persephone. By Mnemosyne he had the Muses, first Calliope, then Cleio, Melpomene, Euterpe, Erato, Terpsichore, Ourania, Thaleia, and Polymnia.

### **B2 Orpheus**

Calliope and Oiagros (though supposedly Apollo) had Linos, whom Heracles killed, and Orpheus, who was trained to sing to the cithara and moved stones and trees by his singing. When his wife Eurydice died after being bitten by a snake, he went down to the house of Hades, wishing to bring her back, and persuaded Plouton to send her up. Plouton promised to do this if Orpheus would not turn around as he made his way until he arrived at his own house. But Orpheus, in doubt, turned around and looked at his wife, and she returned to the underworld. Orpheus also discovered the mysteries of Dionysos, and he was buried near Pieria after he was torn apart by Mainads.

### **B3 Hyacinthos, Thamyris, and Others**

Cleio fell in love with Pieros son of Magnes because of Aphrodite's anger (Cleio had reproached her for loving Adonis). She shared his bed and had a son by him, Hyacinthos. Thamyris, the son of Philammon and the Nymph Argiope, came to desire Hyacinthos and was the first to love other men. But Apollo later accidentally killed Hyacinthos, who was his boyfriend, by hitting him with a discus. Thamyris, on the other hand, who excelled in beauty and singing to the cithara, had a musical contest with the Muses and agreed that if he were found better, he would get to sleep with all of them, but if he lost, he would be deprived of whatever they wished. When the Muses bested him, they deprived him of his sight and his skill at the cithara.

Euterpe and the river Strymon had Rhesos, whom Diomedes killed at Troy. According to some he was Calliope's son. Thaleia and Apollo had the Corybantes. Melpomene and Acheloos had the Sirens, of whom we shall speak when we tell the story of Odysseus.

### **B4 Hephaistos and Athena**

Hera bore Hephaistos without sexual intercourse. According to Homer, however, she had him with Zeus, and Zeus threw him out of heaven for helping Hera when she was in chains. Zeus hung her from Olympos for sending a storm against Heracles when he was sailing away after taking Troy. Thetis saved Hephaistos after he fell on Lemnos and became crippled in his legs.

Zeus slept with Metis, who changed into many forms in order not to have sex with him, and when she became pregnant, he swallowed her down quickly because Ge had said that after having the daughter she was pregnant with she would have a son who would become ruler of heaven. Zeus was afraid of this and swallowed her. When it was time for the birth, Prometheus (although others say it was Hephaistos) struck Zeus' head with an ax, and Athena, dressed for battle, sprang up out of the top of his head near the river Triton.

**B5 Artemis and Apollo**

[1.4] As for the daughters of Coios, Asteria changed herself into a quail and threw herself into the sea to avoid intercourse with Zeus, and a city was called Asteria after her in former times, though later it was called Delos. Leto, after sleeping with Zeus, was driven over the whole earth by Hera until she came to Delos. She gave birth first to Artemis. Then, with her daughter acting as midwife, she bore Apollo.

Artemis spent her time engaged in hunting and remained a virgin. Apollo learned to prophesy from Pan, the son of Zeus and Hubris, and came to Delphi. At that time Themis gave the oracles. But when the serpent Python, the guardian of the oracle, tried to keep him from passing near the chasm, Apollo killed it and took possession of the oracle. Not much later he also killed Tityos, who was the son of Zeus and Orchomenos' daughter Elare. Out of fear of Hera, Zeus had hidden this woman underground after sleeping with her, though he did bring up into the light her gargantuan son Tityos, with whom she was pregnant. When Leto was coming to Pytho, Tityos saw Leto and, being filled with desire, tried to drag her off with him. But she called her children, and they shot him down with their bows. Even after death he is punished; vultures eat his heart in the house of Hades.

Apollo also killed Marsyas, the son of Olympos, who found the flutes that Athena had thrown away because they made her face ugly and who entered into a musical contest with Apollo. They agreed that the winner would do whatever he wanted to the loser. When the contest started, Apollo flipped his cithara upside down and competed. He told Marsyas to do the same thing. When he could not, Apollo was declared the winner and, suspending Marsyas from an overhanging pine tree, sliced off his skin and thus killed him.

Artemis killed Orion in Delos. They say he was born of the earth and had a gigantic body. Pherecydes says he was the son of Poseidon and Euryale. Poseidon gave him the ability to walk on the sea. He first married Side, whom Hera tossed into the house of Hades because she rivaled her in beauty. Then he went to Chios and sued for the hand of Merope daughter of Oinopion. But Oinopion got him drunk, blinded him after he passed out, and then had him dumped by the shore. Orion went to Hephaistos' forge and picked up a boy. Placing the child on his shoulders, Orion ordered him to guide him to where the sun rises. When he arrived there, he recovered his sight after being completely healed by the solar brightness and set off quickly after Oinopion. But Poseidon had Hephaistos build a house for Oinopion under the earth, and Eos, who had fallen in love with Orion (Aphrodite made Eos fall in love constantly because she had shared Ares' bed), kidnapped him and brought him to Delos. But Orion, according to others, was killed because he challenged Artemis to a discus contest; according to some he was shot by Artemis for trying to rape Opis, one of the virgins who had come from the Hyperboreans. Poseidon married Amphitrite and fathered Triton and Rhode, the latter of whom Helios married.

**C The Rape of Persephone (1.5.1–1.5.3)**

[1.5] Plouton fell in love with Persephone and secretly kidnapped her with Zeus' help. Demeter wandered over the whole earth in search of her by day and night with torches. When she learned from the people of Hermion that Plouton had kidnapped

her, she was angry with the gods and left heaven. She made herself look like a mortal woman and came to Eleusis. First she sat down upon the rock called Agelastos {"Laughless"} after her, which is located near the well known as Callichoros. Then she went to Celeos, who was at that time ruling the Eleusinians. There were women in his house, and they told her to sit with them. An old woman named Iambe joked with the goddess and made her smile. This is why they say women make jokes at the festival of the Thesmophoria.

When Celeos' wife Metaneira had a child, Demeter took it and nursed it. Wishing to make it immortal, she placed the infant in the fire during the night and stripped away its mortal flesh. By day Demophon (for this was the child's name) grew astoundingly, and so Praxithea kept watch, and when she found him hidden in the fire, she cried out. For this reason the infant was destroyed by the fire, and the goddess revealed herself. She prepared a chariot with winged dragons and gave wheat to Triptolemos, the eldest of Metaneira's children. Drawn through the sky in the chariot, he scattered seed over the whole inhabited world. But Panyasis says that Triptolemos was Eleusis' son, for he says that it was to Eleusis<sup>1</sup> that Demeter came. Pherecydes says that he was the son of Oceanos and Ge.

When Zeus ordered Plouton to send Kore back up, Plouton gave her a pomegranate seed to eat so that she would not remain for a long time by her mother's side. Not foreseeing what would result, she ate it. Ascalaphos, the son of Acheron and Gorgyra, testified against Persephone, and so Demeter placed a heavy rock on top of him in the house of Hades. Persephone was forced to remain for a third of each year with Plouton and the rest of the year with the gods. That is what is told about Demeter.

### D1 The Gigantomachy and Typhon (1.6.1–1.6.3)

[1.6] But Ge, angry about what happened to the Titans, produced the Giants by Ouranos, unsurpassed in bodily size, in power unconquerable. They looked frightful in countenance, with thick hair hanging from their heads and chins, and they had serpent coils for legs. According to some they were born in Phlegrai, but according to others in Pallene. They hurled rocks and flaming trees into heaven. Greatest of them all were Porphyrion and Alcyoneus. Alcyoneus was immortal as long as he fought in the same land where he was born, and he even drove the cattle of Helios out of Erytheia. It had been prophesied to the gods that none of the Giants could be killed by gods, but that if a mortal fought as their ally, the Giants would die. When Ge learned of this, she sought a magic plant to prevent them from being killed even by a mortal, but Zeus forbade Eos, Selene, and Helios to shine. Then he himself cut the plant before Ge could and had Athena call Heracles to help them as an ally. Heracles first shot Alcyoneus, but when he fell onto the earth, he was reinvigorated. At Athena's direction, Heracles dragged him outside of Pallene. That, then, is how he died; but Porphyrion moved against Heracles and Hera in the battle. Zeus put desire for Hera into him. She called for help when the Giant was tearing her clothes in his desire to rape her, and after Zeus hit him with a thunderbolt, Heracles shot and

<sup>1</sup> King Eleusis, eponymous ruler of the city.

killed him with his bow. As for the other Giants, Apollo shot Ephialtes' left eye out; Heracles shot out the right. Dionysos killed Eurytos with his thyrsos. Hecate killed Clytios with torches. Hephaistos killed Mimas by hitting him with molten metal. Athena threw the island of Sicily onto Encelados as he fled, and she cut the skin off of Pallas and covered her own body with it during the battle. Polybotes was pursued by Poseidon across the sea and came to Cos. Poseidon broke off a piece of the island (called Nisyron) and threw it on him. Hermes, wearing Hades' cap, killed Hippolytos in the fight, while Artemis killed Gratian. The Moirai, fighting with bronze clubs, killed Agrios and Thoas. Zeus destroyed the rest by hurling his thunderbolts. Heracles shot all of them as they died.

## D2 Typhon

When the gods had defeated the Giants, Ge became more angry, copulated with Tartaros, and bore Typhon in Cilicia. He had a form that was a mix of man and beast. He bested in size and strength everything that Ge had produced. As far as the thighs he was man-shaped and of such immense size that he was taller than all the mountains, and his head often touched the stars. One of his hands stretched out to the west and one to the east, and from them stood out a hundred dragon heads. From the thighs down he had gigantic viper coils that, when stretched out, reached as far as the very top of his head and produced a great hissing. His whole body was covered in wings, his coarse hair was whipped away from his head and chin by the wind, and fire flashed from his eyes. [Such was Typhon, so great was Typhon when he threw flaming rocks as he moved against heaven itself with hissing noises and shouting, and he belched a great blast of fire from his mouth.]

When the gods saw him attacking heaven, they took refuge in Egypt and, being pursued, changed their forms into animals. But Zeus threw thunderbolts when Typhon was far off and cut him down with an adamantine sickle when he came close. He doggedly pursued him as he fled to Mount Casios, which looks over Syria. There Zeus saw that Typhon was seriously wounded and engaged him hand-to-hand. But Typhon wrapped his coils around Zeus and got him in a hold. He stripped away the sickle and cut out the sinews of his hands and feet. Lifting Zeus onto his shoulders, he carried him across the sea to Cilicia, and when he arrived, he put him into the Corycian cave. Likewise, hiding the sinews in a bearskin, he stowed them there. He set the dragoness Delphyne to guard him. This girl was half-beast. But Hermes and Aigipan stole the sinews and put them back in Zeus without being caught. Zeus, having gotten his strength back, suddenly flew down from heaven in a chariot pulled by winged horses and threw thunderbolts at Typhon as he pursued him to the mountain called Nysa, where the Moirai deceived him as he fled, and, persuaded that he would be reinvigorated, he tasted the ephemeral fruits. When the pursuit began again, he came to Thrace and, fighting around Mount Haimos, hurled whole mountains. But these were forced back on him by the thunderbolt, and blood {*haima*} gushed out onto the mountain, and they say that it is from this that the mountain is called Haimos. As Typhon tried to flee across the Sicilian sea, Zeus threw Mount Aitna in Sicily on him. This mountain is enormous, and down to this day they say that the eruptions of fire from it come from the thunderbolts that were hurled. But enough about that.

### E1 Prometheus and Humanity (1.7.1–1.7.3)

[1.7] Prometheus fashioned humans from water and earth. He also gave them fire without Zeus' knowledge by hiding it in a fennel stalk. When Zeus discovered this, he ordered Hephaistos to nail his body to Mount Caucasus (this is a mountain in Scythia). Prometheus was nailed to it and bound for many years. Each day an eagle flew down to him and would eat the lobes of his liver, which grew back at night. Prometheus paid this penalty for the stolen fire until Heracles later freed him, as I will explain in the section on Heracles.

#### E2 Deucalion and Pyrrha

Prometheus had a son, Deucalion. He was king of the area around Phthia and married Pyrrha, the daughter of Epimetheus and Pandora, whom the gods made as the first woman. When Zeus wished to wipe out the bronze race, Deucalion built an ark at Prometheus' direction. He put into it supplies and boarded it with Pyrrha. Zeus poured a great rain from heaven and flooded most of Greece so that all the people were destroyed except a few who escaped to the nearby high mountains. At that time the mountains in Thessaly split, and everything outside of the Isthmos and the Peloponnese was flooded. Deucalion was carried in the ark across the sea for nine days and an equal number of nights and landed on Mount Parnassos. There, when the rains stopped, he disembarked and sacrificed to Zeus Phyxios {"God of Escape"}. Zeus sent Hermes to him and bade him choose whatever he wanted. Deucalion chose to have people. At Zeus' direction he picked up rocks and threw them over his head; the ones Deucalion threw became men and the ones Pyrrha threw became women. From this they were also metaphorically called people {*laos*} from the word for stone {*laas*}.

#### E3 Children of Deucalion

Deucalion had children by Pyrrha: first Hellen, whom some say Zeus fathered; second Amphictyon, who ruled Attica after Cranaos; then a daughter, Protogeneia, by whom Zeus fathered Aethlios. Hellen with the Nymph Orseis had Doros, Xouthos, and Aiolos. The people called Greeks he named Hellenes after himself and divided the land among his children. Xouthos got the Peloponnese, and by Creousa daughter of Erechtheus he fathered Achaïos and Ion. The Achaïans and the Ionians are named after them. Doros got the land outside the Peloponnese and named the inhabitants Dorians after himself. Aiolos ruled over the places in Thessaly and called those who dwelled there Aiolians. He married Enarete daughter of Deïmachos and fathered seven sons, Cretheus, Sisyphos, Athamas, Salmoneus, Deïon, Magnes, and Perieres, and five daughters, Canace, Alcyone, Peisidice, Calyce, and Perimede. Perimede and Acheloos had Hippodamas and Orestes. Peisidice and Myrmidon had Antiphos and Actor.

### F Oineus, Meleagros, and the Calydonian Boar Hunt (1.8.1–1.8.3)

[1.8] Oineus was king of Calydon and was the first to get a vine plant from Dionysos. He married Althaia daughter of Thestios and fathered Toxeus. When Toxeus jumped over the ditch around the city, Oineus himself killed him. In addition to him, Oineus had Thyreus, Clymenos, a daughter named Gorge, whom Andraimon