

The greek gods

[Religion](#), [God](#)



Many people would blatantly state that the importance of the gods in Greek society derives from the fact that Gods in any society are usually used to explain phenomenon that people cannot logically comprehend, but in ancient Greece gods were actually entities that took part in the workings of society itself.

Even simple aspects of day-to-day life such as sex and disputes between mortals were supposedly influenced by godly workings. Unlike modern religions such as Catholicism, Buddhism, and Hinduism, where an omnipotent force supposedly controls the workings of the world, a hierarchy of Gods characterized religion in ancient Greece. Working as one big family, which they actually were, each one of the Greek gods governed a certain aspect of the world in a way that usually reflected their own humanlike personalities.

These unique personalities also contained many human flaws such as envy and greed, and were where the Greek God's importance lay. Greek religion was more concentrated on the way an individual dealt with situations that popped up in the world around him than on understanding the world itself. In other words the Greeks were more interested in the workings of the mind than in the workings of the environment around them.

This was so because unlike us, the Greeks believed that they already had explanations for trivial questions such as, " Where the world came from?" " Who are we?" and " Who controls the world around us?"

To them all these questions could simply be explained by looking at their own mythology. It is hard for us to really understand how deeply these

beliefs were rooted into their personalities, to the Greeks if some natural phenomenon occurred it occurred because one of their gods had decided to make it occur, it was just as simple as that.

The existence of the God's to the Greeks was something just as simple as that the fact that the sky is blue is simple to us. The strength of these preconceived ideas can be seen in Strepsiades's words while he argues with Socrates in Aristophanes's *The Clouds*:

STREPSIADES: " What on earth - ! You mean you don't believe in Zeus?"

SOCRATES: " Zeus? Who's Zeus?"

STREPSIADES: " Zeus who lives on Olympus, of course."

SOCRATES: " Now really, you should know better. There is no Zeus."

STREPSIADES: " What? Well, who sends the rain, then? Answer me that."

In General the Greeks respected and feared their gods because they understood that they were superior creatures, but they usually felt differently about different gods depending on that God's personality and the myths that surrounded his existence. There were the beautiful gods, fair gods, angry gods, demigods etc. No one god was all evil or all nice, the same way that no one human is all evil or all nice.

The Greeks took their God's actions towards the way a human acted in one of their Myths as examples on how to act when faced with certain situations. Their Myths were used as guidelines so that the Greeks themselves could lead their lives by dealing with certain situations in a way which was

considered to be satisfactory in the eyes of the Gods that they believed in so dearly.