

Greek mythology and its effects on civilization assignment

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Greek religion encompasses the collection of beliefs and rituals practiced in ancient Greece in the form of both popular public religion and cult practices. Many Greeks recognized the major gods and goddesses, such as Zeus, Poseidon, Hades and many others through philosophies such as Stoicism. The religious practices of the Greeks extended beyond mainland Greece to the islands and coasts of Ionia in Asia Minor to Sicily and southern Italy, and scattered Greek colonies in the Western Mediterranean. Greek religion was tempered by Etruscan cult and belief to form much of the later Ancient Roman religion.

Greek religion had an extensive mythology. It consisted largely of stories of the gods and how they affected humans on earth. Myths often revolved around heroes and their actions. Many different species existed in Greek mythology. Chief among these were the gods and humans, though the Titans also frequently appeared in Greek myths. They predated the Olympian gods, and were hated by them. Lesser species included the half-man, half-horse centaurs and nymphs. Many Greek myths revolved around the Trojan war between Greece and Troy.

Greek mythology largely survived and was added in order to form the later Roman Mythology. The Greeks and Romans were literate societies, and much mythology was written down in the form of poetry and plays, which became popular in Christian post-Renaissance Europe, where it was often used as a basis for the works of artists such as Michaelangelo and Botticelli. Most Christians or those religions that follow the basic principles of the bible believe in the stories told therein, and are regarded as actual historical accounts of important people, events and concepts of the Christian faith.
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However, stories of Greek and Roman mythology are typically regarded as nothing more than fantasy, fictional stories. The Ancient Greek empire was more more vast than modern-day Greece. The fact is that Greek myths contain unrealistic and unbelievable characters, events and other elements, but upon comparison of Greek mythology stories with different biblical accounts, it is apparent that parallels between the two do exist. These similarities begin with the creation stories – as both the Christian creation story and Greek creation story both begin with darkness and nothingness.

God is the parallel to the Greek Chaos in that he invents the same things with the exception of the underworld. However, unlike Chaos, God is not a void of nothingness, but the beginning of all things. There is also slight similarity in the separations or falls of man's relationships with God and Zeus, the later chief god of the ancient Greeks. In both cases, temptation was in the form of food, and the most important similarity is the negative role that women play in each. In both the Greek and Christian accounts of the early world, there exist stories of great floods that destroyed most of humankind.

War was also a common characteristic of both the Ancient Greek world and of the biblical world. The Trojan war was a major event in Greek history, and the gods always seemed to play important roles in his war, especially Zeus. Similarly, the bible accounts many stories of wars between different countries and religious groups. Greek mythology has greatly affected the English language in many ways. A "Herculean" task refers to the Twelve Labors of Hercules, when he is attempting to do impossible tasks. 1.

Morpheus is the name of the Greek god of sleep, and “ morphine,” the drug, comes from this Greek character’s name.

The word “ panic,” meaning chaos or pandemonium, comes from the reference to the Greek god of “ woods and fields;” panic arose when Pan chased young maidens through the woods. The story of Achilles is from Greek mythology: his heel was said to be the only place on his body where he was susceptible to attack; now known as someone’s “ achilles heel,” it is derived from the following story: ... when Achilles was a baby, it was foretold that he would die in battle from an arrow in the foot. To prevent his death, his mother Thetis took Achilles to the River Styx which was supposed to offer powers of invincibility and dipped his body into the water... holding] Achilles by the heel... [which] was not washed over by the water of the magical river. The Olympic games which are held every four years come from the Greek practice of the same event. The Olympic Games reached their zenith in the 6th and 5th centuries BC, but then gradually declined in importance as the Romans gained power and influence in Greece. ... [it is thought to have ended approximately in] 393 AD, when the emperor Theodosius I declared that all pagan cults and practices be eliminated... After the demise of the Olympics, they were not held again until the late 19th century.