

# Trojan horse: an analysis of accepting such a 'gift'



One of the main stories told throughout Greek mythology is the story of the Trojan War. In the story, the Greeks and The Trojans battle for the fair Helen. When it appeared that the Greeks had lost, they set sail, leaving behind a wooden horse. When Troy decided that they were victorious, they accepted the giant wooden horse into the gates of the city. Little did the Trojans know that inside the hollow horse, Greek soldiers were hiding, awaiting nightfall. The decision of the Trojans to accept the horse was ultimately a bad decision.

When the Trojans saw the magnificent horse, they looked upon it as a trophy. Although Cassandra the prophetess and Laocoön the priest of Apollo had both argued against allowing the horse into the gates, the Trojans ignored the warnings (“ The Trojan War: c. 1200 BCE”). Cassandra was cursed by Apollo to always predict the truth but to never be believed. She warned Paris not to go to Sparta. She “ continued to predict the calamities in store for the Trojans” but was never listened to (Bell 161). Laocoön also warned the Trojans not to allow the horse into the gates when he said, “ I fear the Greeks even when they offer gifts” (Laocoön 633). He too was ignored and was punished by the gods for his warnings (Laocoön 634). The giant horse loomed outside of the gates while the soldiers inside held their breath, waiting for victory. When the Trojans had come upon the statue, “ they believed it meant that the Greeks had withdrawn, leaving them the victors” (“ The Trojan War: c. 1200 BCE”). The tremendous statue was allowed into the city of Troy. When day turned to night, the Greeks snuck out of the statue and destroyed the city of Troy. Fires were created and men

were killed. Women and children were stolen from their homes and sent or sold away.

The idea only sprouted because the Greeks were losing the battle of Troy. Helen had been stolen from the Spartans and Menelaus was furious. His army was determined to get her back for their king. The giant horse was created by the Greeks under Odysseus' command. Odysseus knew that trickery would be the only way to win against Troy. Odysseus had "ordered a gigantic wooden horse to be built, hollow inside to accommodate many Greek soldiers." ("The Trojan War: c. 1200 BCE"). With the hope of tricking the Trojans into accepting the horse, Odysseus and other Greek soldiers hid in the hollow horse while the rest of the Greek soldiers were sent home on their ships. Just Sinon was left behind in order to trick the soldiers into accepting the gift ("The Trojan War: c. 1200 BCE"). The Trojans were so overcome with excitement, that they accepted the horse as a trophy with little thought.

Allowing the horse into Troy was a bad decision because Troy was taken over and fell with the Trojan War. The Trojan War "lasted ten years and was successful only because of the Trojan Horse, a work of deception" ("War Engines: Land and Sea"). If Odysseus had not thought of the giant statue, the Trojans would have won the war. Despite the multiple warnings toward the Trojans, the "gift" was accepted into the gates of the city. The Trojans "dragged the horse inside the walls and held a raucous celebration. Late in the night, after the drunken revelers had fallen asleep, Odysseus and his men climbed out of the horse and sacked the city. Menelaus returned home with Helen" ("The Trojan War: c. 1200 BCE"). The city of Troy fell and the

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Greeks were victorious. The lesson the Trojans learned with their ten years war was that things aren't always what they appear and that one should always look a little deeper into what appears to be a victory. They also learned that Cassandra had been right all along (Cassandra 209). This helped lead to the classic Greek mythological idea of fate and destiny.

The famous Greek myth of The Trojan War is an excellent example of a decision gone wrong. The decision of the people of Troy led to the downfall of the city. Ignoring the warnings of those who opposed the giant horse, Troy was destroyed by the clever Greek men hiding inside. The one decision that was made completely changed the outcome of many lives.