

### Invocation to the Muses

This passage is an excerpt from Hesiod's "Theogony." It describes the Heliconian Muses who live on Mount Helicon and dance around the altar of Cronion. They sing of the gods, including Zeus, Hera, Athena, Apollo, Artemis, and others, and they taught Hesiod the art of singing verse. The Muses give Hesiod a staff of sappy laurel and a divine voice to celebrate the past and future. They instruct him to sing of the generation of the gods, but always to sing of themselves, the Muses, first and last. The Muses are the daughters of Zeus and Memory, born on Pieria, and they bring joy to men by imparting the gift of song.



"And they gave me a staff, a branch of good sappy laurel, plucking it off, spectacular. And they breathed into me a voice divine, so I might celebrate past and future." (lines 34-35)

The muses gifted the shepherd with a staff made out of good sappy laurel, however, once they gave him the staff they filled him with the desire to sing about the eternal gods.

### The First Gods

This passage is a summary of the creation myth of ancient Greek mythology. It describes how Chaos and the Abyss were the first things to exist, followed by the emergence of Gaia, the Earth, who became the foundation of all. From Gaia's union with Erebus and Night, Aether and Day were born. Gaia then gave birth to the Mountains and the Sea, as well as the twelve Titans, including Ouranos, Coios, Hyperion, and Theia. The passage highlights the importance of reproduction and the power of Eros, the god of love, and the importance and calmness that Gaia brought.



"In the beginning there was only Chaos, the Abyss, But then Gaia, the Earth, came into being, Her broad bosom the ever-firm foundation of all"(lines 116-118).

This represents the concept of the creation myth where chaos initially reigns, but then Gaia comes into being to establish order and structure.

### **The Castration of Ouranos**

Gaia, the Earth, gave birth to many powerful beings, including Cronos, who hated his lecherous father, Ouranos. Gaia rallied her children and made a plan to take revenge on their father. She created a sickle from gray flint and gave it to Cronos. When Ouranos came to settle himself on Earth, Cronos used the sickle to castrate his father, throwing his genitals behind him. From the blood, the Furies, Giants, and Meliai were born.



"Listen to me, children, and we might yet get even with your criminal father for what he has done to us. After all, he started this whole ugly business" (lines 164-166).

This depicts Cronus when he finally gets revenge on his father by castrating him.

### **The Birth of Aphrodite**

In this passage from Hesiod's "Theogony," the creation of Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty, is described. Her genitals were cut off and thrown into the sea, where they formed a foam from which Aphrodite was born. She came ashore on the island of Cypros, and her arrival was marked by the growth of tender grass under her feet. Aphrodite is known by several names, including Cythereia and Philommedes, and she is accompanied by Eros and Desire. The passage also mentions the Titans, who were named as such by their father Ouranos as a reproach for their actions.

**WHEN YOU REALIZE YOU WERE  
BORN FROM GENITALS IN THE  
OCEAN**



"The genitalia themselves, freshly cut with flint, were thrown / Clear of the mainland into the restless, white-capped sea, / Where they floated a long time. A white foam from the god-flesh / Collected around them, and in that foam a maiden developed / And grew."(Lines 190-192)

Genitalia that were freshly cut off with flint were thrown in the ocean. While floating in the ocean foam began to gather around them and from it rose Aphrodite.

### **Other Early Gods**

This passage is an excerpt from Hesiod's "Theogony" and describes the various offspring of the goddess Night, including Blame, Grief, the Hesperides, the Destinies, Nemesis, Deception, and Old Age. The passage also describes the children of the sea god Pontos, including Nereus and his fifty daughters, as well as Thaumias and his wife Electra, who gave birth to Iris and the Harpies. Additionally, the passage mentions the Graiai, the Gorgons, and the birth of Pegasus after Perseus defeated the mortal Medousa. Finally, the passage describes the birth of Echidna, a monstrous creature with the body of a serpent and the face of a woman, who lives underground.



"And sleeping with no one, the ebony goddess Night gave birth to Blame and agonizing Grief"(lines 213-217)

This describes the birth of two personified concepts, Blame and Grief. The line suggests that these negative emotions are natural and inevitable, and that they originate from the darkness and loneliness of night.

### **Hecate**

This passage describes the goddess Hecate, whom Zeus has given many gifts, including a share of the earth, the sea, and a province of starry heaven. Hecate is highly esteemed by the deathless gods and is called upon by men when they sacrifice and pray according to ancestral rites. She has a share of the privileges of all the gods and is greatly aided and advances whomever she wishes. Hecate is also good at standing by those who work the sea, those who compete in athletic contests, and those who work with livestock. She is the nurse of the young and is greatly privileged among the Immortals.



"She is good, with Hermes, at increasing stock in a pen, droves of cattle, herds of goats on a plain, flocks of wooly sheep—if she wills in her heart she can multiply them or make them diminish"(lines 445-449)

This suggests that Hecate has the ability to increase or decrease the number of animals in a herd or flock. This power is similar to that of Hermes, who was also associated with livestock and agriculture. It emphasizes Hecate's importance as a goddess of abundance and prosperity.

### **The Birth of the Olympians**

In this passage from Hesiod's Theogony, Cronos, fearful of being overthrown by his child, swallows each of his newborn children, including Zeus. However, Rhea, the mother of the children, devises a plan with Earth and starry Heaven to hide Zeus and trick Cronos into swallowing a stone instead. Zeus grows up and eventually overthrows Cronos with the help of his siblings, who are freed from their father's stomach. Zeus then becomes the ruler of both mortals and immortals, armed with his thunderbolt and lightning.

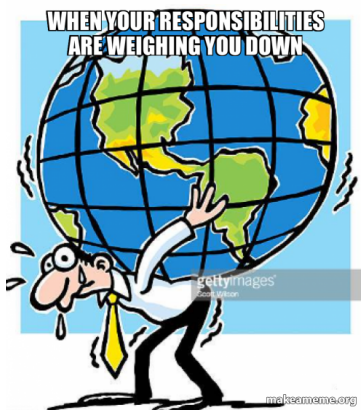


"Then she wrapped up a great stone in swaddling clothes and gave it to Cronos, Ouranos' son, the great lord and king of the earlier gods. He took it in his hands and rammed it down into his belly, the poor fool! He had no idea that a stone had been substituted for his son..."(lines 489-493)

This quote explains how Rhea deceived Cronos by wrapping up a stone in swaddling clothes and giving it to him, which he swallowed thinking it was his son. This cunning act allowed Rhea to hide Zeus, her youngest son, and saved him from being devoured by Cronos like his other siblings.

### **Prometheus**

The passage tells the story of Iapetos, who had a daughter named Clymene and a son named Atlas with her. Atlas was tasked by Zeus to hold up the sky at earth's limits. Prometheus, another son of Iapetos, was punished by Zeus for giving fire to mortals, which was supposed to be a god's privilege. Zeus was angry with Prometheus for tricking him into choosing bones over meat from a sacrifice. He was also angry that mortals had fire and punished them for it. However, Prometheus managed to steal the fire and give it back to mortals. The passage highlights Zeus' power and the cunningness of Prometheus.



"Atlas, crimped hard, holds up the wide sky at earth's limits"(lines 519-520)

This describes Atlas in his eternal punishment, standing at the edge of the earth holding up the sky without rest or respite, as this was the task assigned to him by the all-knowing Zeus.

### **Pandora**

The passage describes how the Greek gods Zeus and Athena dressed up a clay sculpture to look like a beautiful woman, whom Zeus then gifted to men as a punishment. Women are depicted as an infestation and curse upon men, bringing pain and suffering, but also balance and struggle to their lives. The passage concludes with the idea that even Prometheus, a son of Iapetos, could not escape the wrath of Zeus.



"That's just how Zeus, the high lord of thunder, made women as a curse for mortal men, evil conspirators."(lines 602-603)

Zeus created women as a punishment for men and as evil conspirators. It implies that women were seen as a source of trouble and misery for men.

### **The Titanomachy**

Zeus led the gods in a ten-year war against the Titans. The Titans, who had been banished underground by their father, Ouranos, fought against the gods, with neither side able to claim victory. Zeus gave three of the Titans ambrosia and nectar, which increased their strength and fighting spirit. With renewed vigor, the Titans and gods fought each other until Zeus unleashed his full power. He hurled thunderbolts and lightning, and the earth and sky trembled and burned. The chthonian Titans were engulfed in heat, and the battle turned in favor of the gods. Three of the Titans rallied in the front lines, firing three hundred stones at a time.



"For a long time they fought, hearts bitter with toil,  
Going against each other in the shock of battle,  
The Titans and the gods who were born from Cronos."(lines 634-636)

This quote shows that the Titans and the gods were once fighting against each other for dominance. It is similar to when siblings may fight with each other for power or control in the house. However, the caption implies that the siblings ultimately come together and overthrow their parents, which is what happened when the gods and Titans eventually united against their common enemy, their father, Ouranos.

### **Tartaros**

This passage from Hesiod's Theogony describes the location and inhabitants of Tartarus, a deep and gloomy abyss located beneath the earth, where the Titans are imprisoned by Zeus. The passage also describes the house of black Night, where Sleep and Death reside, and the echoing halls of Hades and Persephone, guarded by a fierce hound. Additionally, the passage mentions the goddess Styx and her important role in the gods' oath-taking. Finally, it mentions the houses of Cottos, Gyges, and Briareos, who are helpers of Zeus and live in houses on Ocean's deep fundaments.





“A bronze anvil falling down from the sky, Would fall nine days and nights and on the tenth hit earth.”(lines 726-727)

This quote mainly helps the reader get a grasp of how far away heaven was. By using the weight of an anvil and terminal velocity you can approximate how far away heaven is.

### **Typhoios**

After Zeus defeated the Titans and became ruler of the universe, Earth gave birth to Typhoios, a god with a hundred heads, each with a dragon and fiery eyes. Typhoios would have ruled over the immortals and men, but Zeus defeated him with thunderbolts and lightning, causing a great earthquake and a firestorm that melted the earth. Zeus then hurled Typhoios into Tartaros, where he caused the damp monsoons to blow, but also the evil winds that bring destruction to sailors and ruin farmlands.



"When Zeus' temper had peaked, he seized his weapons, searing bolts of thunder and lightning, and as he leaped from Olympos, struck." (lines 860-862)

This quote describes how Zeus, after witnessing the terrifying power of Typhoios, became enraged and used his signature weapons, bolts of thunder and lightning, to strike and defeat the monster.

### **Zeus in Power**

In this passage from Hesiod's "Theogony," it is described how the gods overcame the Titans to establish their rule, with Zeus being crowned their king. Zeus marries several goddesses and fathers many children, including Athena, Apollo, and Artemis, through a combination of trickery and divine love. Other gods, such as Hera and Dionysus, also have important relationships and children. The passage highlights the divine lineage of the gods and their immense power and influence over mortal affairs.



"But when she was about to deliver the owl-eyed goddess Athena, Zeus tricked her, gulled her with crafty words, and stuffed her in his stomach, taking the advice of Earth and starry Heaven. They told him to do this so that no one but Zeus would hold the title of King among the eternal gods, for it was predestined that very wise children would be born from Metis."(lines 893-899)

This quote from Greek mythology describes how Zeus swallowed his wife Metis when she was about to give birth to Athena. Zeus did this because he was told by Earth and starry Heaven that if Metis had a son, he would become more powerful than Zeus.

### **Goddesses and Heroes**

In this passage from Hesiod's "Catalogue of Women," the narrator bids farewell to the Olympian gods and introduces the goddesses who have had children with mortal men, producing offspring

with divine qualities. He tells of various mythological figures, such as Demeter, Harmonia, Callirhoe, and Thetis, who bore children with mortal men and produced heroes and kings. The passage concludes with a call to the Muses to sing of these divine women.



“The goddesses who slept with mortal men,  
And immortal themselves bore children like gods”

Various mythological figures had children with mortal men and bore children with divine qualities who became gods.