

Background: Paris, youngest son of King Priam the king of Troy (Trojan), abducts Helen from her husband, King Menelaus the king of Sparta (Greek). Paris and Helen return to Troy. King Menelaus and the wise Odysseus travel Troy to ask for the return of Helen. When the request is denied, Menelaus and his brother, Agamemnon, decide to attack Troy. Multitudes of Greek soldiers gather under the direction of Agamemnon. Other armies, including one led by Achilles, destroy cities allied with the Trojans and ravage the Trojan countryside. The siege against the Trojans lasts for about ten years. About nine years into the war, the story of *The Iliad* takes place.

Greeks are exhausted by the fighting. The famous Greek leaders, Agamemnon and Achilles, fight over women. The gods punish them with a plague. Achilles throws a fit and refuses to fight. Meanwhile, his best friend, Patroclus, borrows Achilles' armor and is killed in battle by Hector. Achilles kills Hector and desecrates his body.

The Trojan men

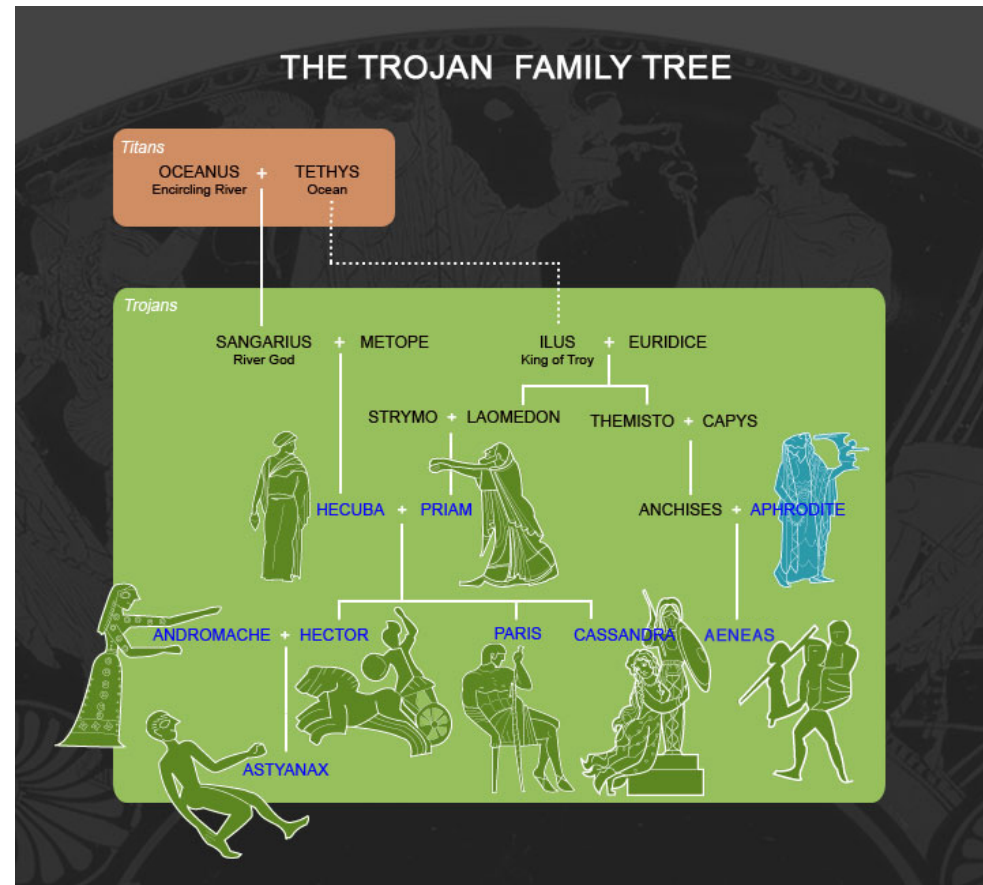
- Hector — son of King Priam and the foremost Trojan warrior.
- Aeneas — son of Anchises and Aphrodite.
- Deiphobus — brother of Hector and Paris.
- Paris — Helen's lover-abductor.
- Priam — the aged King of Troy.
- Antenor — King Priam's advisor, who argues for returning Helen to end the war.
- Polydorus — son of Priam and Laothoe.
- Pandarus — famous archer and son of Lycaon.

The Trojan women

- Hecuba (Ἑκάβη, *Hekabe*) — Priam's wife, mother of Hector, Cassandra, Paris, and others.
- Helen (Ἑλένη) — daughter of Zeus; Menelaus's wife; espoused first to Paris, then to Deiphobus; her abduction by Paris precipitated the war.
- Andromache — Hector's wife, mother of Astyanax.
- Cassandra — Priam's daughter; courted by Apollo, who bestows the gift of prophecy to her; upon being rejected by her, he curses her, and her warnings of Trojan doom go unheeded.
- Briseis — a Trojan woman captured by the Greeks; she was Achilles' prize of the Trojan war.

Divine help on the Trojan side:

Aphrodite	Ares	Apollo
Artemis	Zeus	Leto
Scamander		Eris



Background (cont'd): Finally, Odysseus thinks up a way to trick the Trojans. The Greeks build the Trojan Horse and pretend to sail away. The Trojans, thinking the Greeks have given up, have a major party and bring the Horse into the walled city. The Greeks decimate the Trojan population, ending the war. A Trojan survivor, Aeneas, sails off (some say to found the city of Rome, but others say Rome was founded by twin brothers). Aeneas' story is told in *The Aeneid*. While sacking Troy, the Greeks do all kinds of horrible things (rape Trojan wives on altars, throw babies off walls, etc) which enrages various gods and goddesses. Because of the gods' wrath, most Greeks have trouble returning home from the war. The most famous story is *The Odyssey* which details Odysseus' ten year journey.

The Greek men

- Menelaus — King of Sparta, husband of Helen and brother of Agamemnon
- Agamemnon — King of Mycenae, leader of the Greeks; captures Cassandra
- Achilles - war hero; killer of Hector for revenge of friend's death
- Odysseus — King of Ithaca, Greek commander
- Ajax the Greater — son of Telamon and king of Salamis
- Diomedes — son of Tydeus, King of Argos
- Ajax the Lesser — son of Oileus, often partner of Ajax the Greater
- Nestor — King of Pylos, and trusted advisor to Agamemnon
- Patroclus - Achilles' best friend; killed by Hector

The Greek women

- Thetis - a sea nymph and Achilles' mother
- Helen - daughter of Zeus; married to Menelaus but abducted (willingly or not?) by Paris

Divine help on the Greek side:

Athena	Hera
Poseidon	
Hermes	Hephaestus
	Thetis

