

~ZEUS (63)

- The supreme god of the polytheistic Greeks, corresponding to Jupiter of the Romans. Zeus was a god of the sky and was viewed as having control of the winds, clouds, rain, and thunder, exercising his power over these natural forces for both a destructive and a beneficial purpose.
- The ancient poet Homer [The Iliad, VIII, 1-25] represents Zeus as having greater strength than all the other gods combined. Zeus, however, was not regarded as being supreme in an absolute sense but is at times depicted as becoming a victim of deception and having to yield to the will of the Fates and Destiny.
- Aside from relating the events of his birth, childhood, and acquisition of the throne, the legends are chiefly concerned with the many love affairs of Zeus.
- In the First Century C.E, the townspeople of Lystra, upon seeing Paul heal a lame man, considered Paul and Barnabas to be gods, identifying Paul with Hermes and Barnabas with Zeus. The priest of Zeus even brought out bulls and garlands in order to offer sacrifices with the crowd.
- Now in Lystra there was sitting a certain man disabled in his feet, lame from his mothers womb, and he had never walked at all. (Acts of Apostles 14:8)
- This man was listening to Paul speak, who, on looking at him intently and seeing he had faith to be made well. (Acts of Apostles 14:9)
- Said with a loud voice; Stand up erect on your feet. And he leaped up and began walking. (Acts of Apostles 14:10)
- And the crowds, seeing what Paul had done, raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian tongue; The gods have become like human's and have come down to us! (Acts of Apostles 14:11)
- And they went calling Barnabas Zeus, but Paul Hermes, since he was the one taking the lead in speaking. (Acts of Apostles 14:12)

- And the priest of **Zeus**, whose temple was before the city, brought bulls and garlands to the gates and was desiring to offer sacrifices with the crowds. (**Acts of Apostles 14:13**)
- Two ancient inscriptions discovered in **1909 C.E.** in the vicinity of Lystra testify to the worship of these two gods in that city. One of the inscriptions refers to the **priests of Zeus**, and the other mentions **Hermes Most Great** and **Zeus the sun-god**. [**The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia**, edited by J. Orr, 1960, Vol. III, p. 1944]
- The ship on which Paul as a prisoner set sail from the island of Malta bore the figurehead, **Sons of Zeus**, that is, the twin brothers Castor and Pollux.
- Three months later we set sail in a boat from Alexandria that had wintered in the island and with the figurehead, **Sons of Zeus**. (**Acts of Apostles 28:11**)