

### **Jason: A Great Hero**

Have you ever wondered why all stories of heroes in Greek Mythology seem to be the same? What makes these stories seem the same? The stories of heroes usually contain the hero being sent on a quest, then killing something on their quest, and they are helped by gods and goddesses. Jason was the one who was sent on the quest for the Golden Fleece. He was sent on the quest by his evil uncle who had taken the throne which Jason was suppose to have. The Argonauts were a group of men and one woman that went with Jason on his quest for the Golden Fleece. On their journey they encountered many challenges for example the harpies or the fire breathing bulls. Jason had help as all heroes do but not from a gods or goddesses but from a sorceress named Medea (Skidmore "Jason"). Jason is like other stories of Greek heroes in Greek mythology.

Heroes were sent on quests. The quest that the heroes were sent on were normally is suppose to kill them, but they always seem to complete the task and the live happily ever after. Jason was able to get the Golden Fleece and fly off in safety (Skidmore "Jason"). Perseus was able to kill the Gorgon Medusa with out being turned to stone. Perseus was sent on the quest to kill the Gorgon Medusa. He went to the goddess Athena and she helped him. To make a long story short Peruses killed the gorgon and brought the head back to the king that sent him and showed him the head of Medusa and turned him to stone. Even though Medusa was dead her gaze still turned people to stone (Skidmore "Perseus"). When a hero is sent on a quest the hero normally has to kill a monster.

Most of the times the quests the heroes are sent on are based on killing a monster. In the story of Jason and the Quest of the Golden Fleece Jason had to kill the Harpies. The Harpies were birds with the head of a human (Skidmore "Jason"). In the story of Hercules he killed his family because of a madness that Hera, Zeus's wife, inflicted on him because she was jealous that he was Zeus's son. To atone for his crime of killing his family he was sentenced to perform the labors. The labors were a group of tasks that were said to be impossible. These tasks included killing the Nemean lion and the Hydra. Of course the hero in these stories completes the tasks just a Hercules did. In the end Hercules was poised and he asked Zeus to let him die and then he was able to live on MT. Olympus after he died. (Skidmore "Hercules") The reason for the heroes being able to complete the quests they had help from immortal gods and goddesses.

The heroes are often aided by gods and goddesses. In Jason's story he was helped by the sorceress Medea. In order for Medea to help Jason Hera had to persuade Aphrodite to make Medea fall in love with Jason (Skidmore "Jason"). In the story of Bellerophon and killing the Chimaera Bellerophon was helped by Pegasus. Pegasus was a winged horse that could fly. Bellerophon was also helped by the goddesses Athena she told him to put a piece of lead on the tip of a spear since the Chimaera could not be hurt by man made weapons. Then flying on Pegasus Bellerophon stuffed the piece of lead

down the Chimaera's throat. Since the Chimaera could breathe fire the next time he would breathe fire the lead would melt and poison him and kill him (Skidmore "Bellerophon").

As you can see the story of Jason and the Quest for the Golden Fleece can be compared to other myths of Heroes in Greek Mythology. Heroes were sent on "impossible quests." Most of the time those quests had the hero kill a non-human beast. In all of the stories the hero was helped by others this often included the help of Gods and Goddesses. So if you ever wonder why all of the stories of heroes in Greek Mythology seem to be all alike in many ways you now know why.

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