

Prometheus: God of Science

Zeus gave Prometheus, a Titan, the job of modeling humans. He used river clay and with great care fashioned men in the image of the gods. At the same time, his brother Epimetheus made all kinds of animals and lavished gifts on them with little thought to saving some of the gifts for his brother's human creations. His animals could run fast, see, smell and hear better and had more endurance than Prometheus's humans. Animals kept snug and warm in warm fur coats, while humans shivered in the cold night.

Prometheus felt sorry for his creations. He asked Zeus if he might have some sacred fire for his creations but Zeus said No. "Olympus' fire belongs to the gods."

One night, Prometheus stole a gleaming ember from a sacred hearth and hid it in a hollow stalk of fennel. He carried the fennel down to earth, gave the gift of fire to humans and told them to never let the light from Olympus die out.

When Zeus found out, he was furious. He chained Prometheus to the top of a mountain, where every day an eagle swooped down from the sky to eat his liver. At night his liver grew back.

Meanwhile, men had fire and were no longer cold. Beasts didn't attack them. More importantly, while sitting around the fire at night, humans lifted their eyes from the ground and watched the smoke from the fires spiral upwards; their thoughts rose with it to the stars. No longer earth-bound clods, they began to wonder and think and imagine. This is how science was born.