

# GOLIATHS



## Legends & Lore of Goliaths

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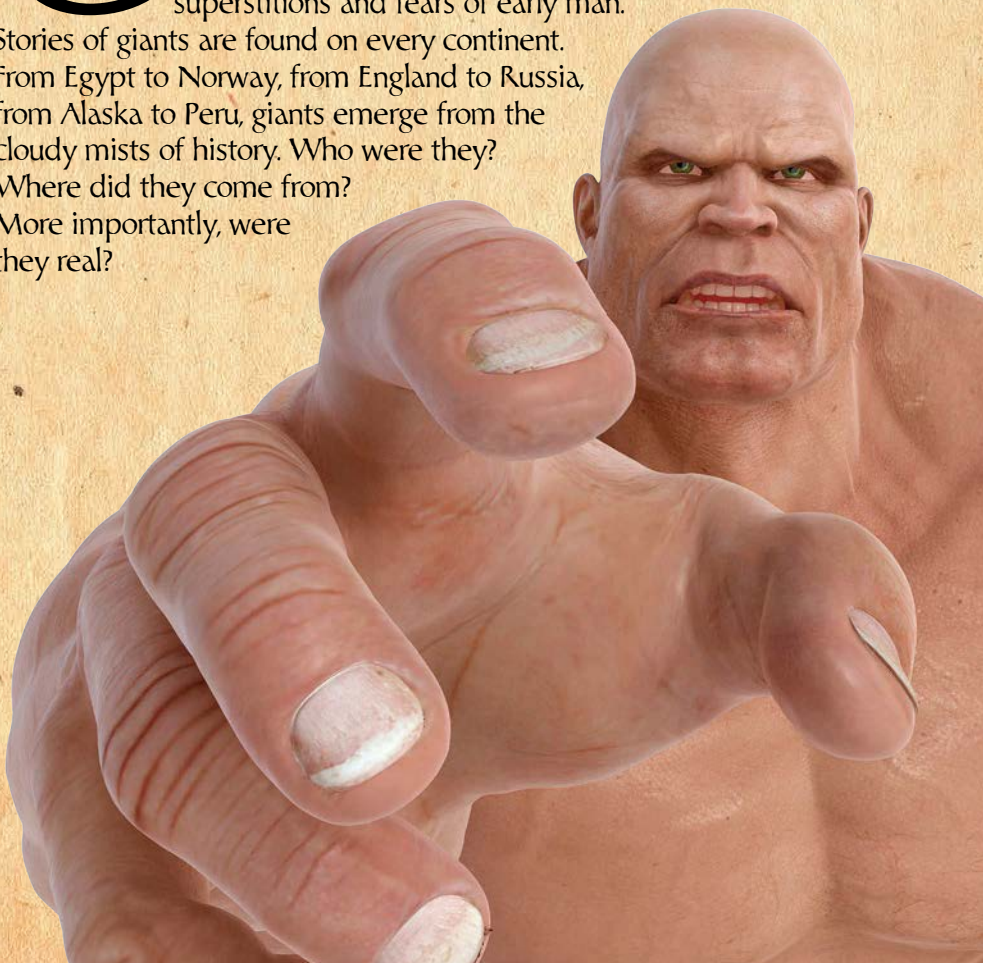
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**G**iants. Wild, ruthless, and barbaric, they fill the pages of literature and saturate the records of mythology. Descending from mountains, raiding villages, stealing cattle, and eating humans, giants represent the primitive superstitions and fears of early man.

Stories of giants are found on every continent. From Egypt to Norway, from England to Russia, from Alaska to Peru, giants emerge from the cloudy mists of history. Who were they? Where did they come from? More importantly, were they real?



## Odysseus Blinds Polyphemus

**W**as Polyphemus, the one-eyed giant whom Odysseus blinded, just a metaphor? Were the frost giants of Norse legend — sworn enemies of the gods — just symbols? Was the war between the Olympian gods and the Titans just a fable? Did David fight Goliath or was it a figment of his own imagination?







# The Giant of Bashan



In the Bible, we read of giants on many different occasions. There is a man, Og of Bashan, whom the Israelites defeated in battle when making their way to the Promised Land. Deuteronomy 3:11 tells us that Og slept in a bed that was 13 feet long, 6 feet wide, and made of iron. Why would Moses go to the trouble to tell us about this bed? Probably because he wanted us to understand that Og was a giant. The Midrash (Jewish commentary on the Old Testament) states the following mythic account of Og: "As the floodwaters swelled, Og, king of Bashan, sat himself on one of the rungs of the ark's ladders and swore to Noah and to his sons that he would be their slave forever. What did Noah do? He punched a hole in the ark, and through it he handed out food to Og every day." Though Og is mentioned in the Bible, this story is not based on a biblical account. Always start with the Bible as the foundation of truth!

# The Greek Legend of Titanomachy



The Greek writer Hesiod tells the story of the Titanomachy. In the story, the great Titan, Cronos, was evil and wicked. His three sons, Zeus, Hades, and Poseidon, conspired to overthrow all of the titans, and so Zeus, armed with his lightning and thunder, set free his uncles: Obriareus, Cottus, and Geyes. These three were monstrous creatures, each with 100 arms and 50 heads. Their strength was limitless, their anger insatiable, and they had been imprisoned by Heaven, the father of Cronos. When Zeus set them free, he gave them ambrosia to drink. Having then drunk of Zeus' ambrosia, the three monsters listened to Zeus' honeyed words and followed him into battle.

The battle raged for ten long years. Zeus threw his thunderbolts until the earth and sky were so filled with smoke, none could tell them apart. The Olympian gods and goddesses, children of the Titans, fought their parents in a brutal clash, until the earth trembled and the starry heavens were shaken. At long last, the Titans were subdued. Driven from their place in the heavens, the sons and daughters of Heaven and Earth were shackled and cast into the pit of Tartarus.

## How Thor Pays Wages, Norse Mythology



Once, Thor was away from Asgard, engaged in battle with evil demons. The gods, who had already built Valhalla and Midgard, were finishing the construction of Asgard, when a skilled craftsman arrived and offered to help them build. What they did not know was that he was a giant in disguise, and he had evil plans for the gods. Since they did not know this, however, they agreed to his help, and asked his price.

"I wish to have Freya as my wife."

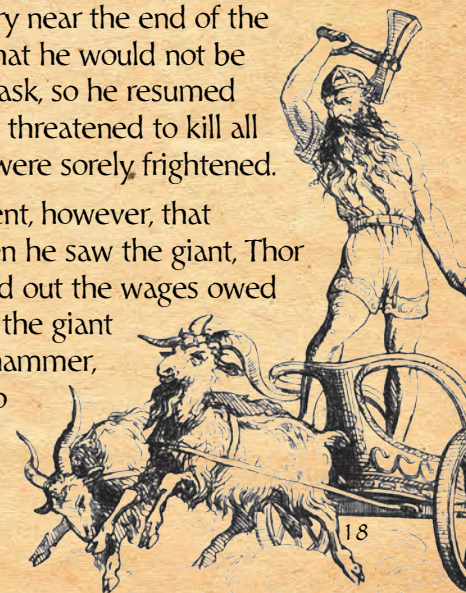
Now the gods were dismayed, and wanted to refuse. Loki, though, who knew who the craftsman was, urged them to accept, and so the gods relented. But they made a condition for the man, and Odin delivered it: "You may have Freya as your wife, provided you finish the work by the end of winter, and you work alone. Should the work be unfinished on the first day of summer, our deal is nullified."

The giant agreed, and said, "But may I have my horse? For she is my companion and worker."

The gods agreed to this, and so on the first day of winter, the visiting carpenter set to work. But at night, he used his enchanted horse to drag a quantity of large blocks into Asgard, and so was able to complete his work at an astonishing rate. The gods were angry, and knew that Loki had given them bad advice. So they captured him and were about to kill him when he claimed that he could fix the problem. They told him that if he didn't, he would be killed.

That night, as the giant worked, a beautiful mare ran past the giant's horse, and the horse took off after her, running into the woods. The giant had to quit his work and go after his horse, and so lost an entire night's work. It was very near the end of the winter, and he knew that he would not be able to complete the task, so he resumed his natural size, and so threatened to kill all of the gods that they were sorely frightened.

It was at this moment, however, that Thor showed up. When he saw the giant, Thor rushed at him and paid out the wages owed to the giant. He struck the giant on the head with his hammer, shattering his skull into pieces. He then hurled the body down into Niflheim.



# World's Tallest People in Recent Times

Gigantism or giantism is the term used to describe those who exhibit excessive growth because of an increase in growth hormones produced by their bodies in childhood.

Average height of a US adult male is 5 ft. 9.9 in. (177.5 cm.)



**BASKETBALL GOAL**  
10 ft. (304.8 cm.)

## TALLEST PERSON

Robert Wadlow

Born: 1918

Died: 1940

8 ft. 11.1 in. (272 cm.)



## TALLEST FEMALE

Zeng Jinlian

Born: 1964

Died: 1982

8 ft. 1.75 in. (248 cm.)



## SHORTEST PERSON

(able to walk)

He Pingping

Born: 1988

Died: 2010

2 ft. 5 in. (74 cm.)



These measurements from modern history are confirmed by Guinness World Records.

FEET



# Why Are There So Many Stories?

**M**ost people would look at these stories and think, “Wow, what imaginations these people had!” But that doesn’t explain why the giant stories from around the world are similar in so many ways, or why the same ideas keep coming up over and over and over again, such as the Flood accounts. But the Bible tells us in Genesis 11 that at one time, everyone spoke one language and had one culture. Then, shortly after the Flood, mankind grew prideful and self-worshipping, and God sent them away from each other. He changed their languages, and sent them in different directions (Genesis 10 gives us an idea of which people went where).

What happens to a story as it gets told and retold, over and over? It changes, of course, but only in certain ways. In some ways, it stays the same or, at the very least, similar. If the early world really did have giants, and the Flood destroyed a world of sin and violence, and the Tower of Babel was real, then we would expect to see versions of those stories being told all over the globe. We would expect them to be similar, but not identical to each other.

And that is exactly what we see.

World mythology reflects the very truths of the Bible. World mythology tells us that there were giants, just like the Rephaim. Just like the Aztec people who believed the first creatures created by their god were fierce and ugly giants (as shown below) who refused to worship him, other mythologies tell us that there was an early world full of violence and evil, a time just like the Bible records. It tells us that giants (just like people) could also be good, kind, and heroic, just like the “men of renown.” But each culture tells the stories just a little differently, also reflecting the change that took place at the tower of Babel.

These myths don’t prove the Bible is wrong; they do the opposite. They point us back to the Bible, back to our history, and back to an age when a race of giants once walked the earth.

