

Hesiod – The Days

from Zeus

Thanks for supporting The Classics Cave.

Please visit and support our sponsors.

The following comes from the Cave's
The Best of Hesiod's Theogony & Works and Days.

Day	The Day's Specific Activity or Activities	General Commentary
1	No specific activity.	A holy day.
2	No specific activity.	Falls haphazardly; harmless; brings nothing.
3	No specific activity.	Falls haphazardly; harmless; brings nothing.
4	Lead a wife into the house (but check the bird omens). Begin to build ships.	A holy day. Shun troubles that gnaw at the heart (this day can fulfill them; thus, potentially bad).
5	No specific activity.	Avoid fifth days! (They are difficult, horrible.) Why? The Furies (Erinyes) assisted at the birth of Oath (Horkos), whom Strife (Eris) brought into the world to trouble those who have sworn falsely.
6	Castrate young goats and sheep. Build sheep pens for flocks.	Good for the birth of a boy (but one who will be fond of sharp speech, lies, cunning words, and secret discourse). Bad for the birth of a girl.
7	No specific activity.	A holy day—the day on which Leto gave birth to Apollo.
8	Castrate boars and loud-bellowing bulls.	Good for the toiling works of man.
9	Beget children.	Good for begetting children and for being born (for both males and females). Good for the toiling works of man. Completely harmless—never wholly evil.
10	No specific activity.	Favorable for a male to be born.
11	Shear sheep. Gather grain.	
12	Shear sheep. Gather grain. Castrate mules. For women:* set up loom and get to work.	The twelfth day is better than the eleventh for these activities (shearing sheep and gathering grain) since the spider spins its web and the ant gathers on that day.
13	Tend plants (do not sow plants).	The best day for tending plants (but not for sowing plants).
14	Tame sheep, oxen, dogs, mules. Open jars.	A day that is holy above all other days. Good for a girl to be born.

HESIOD ▪ THE DAYS FROM ZEUS

15	No specific activity.	Falls haphazardly; harmless; brings nothing.
16	No specific activity.	Very unfavorable for plants. Good for male births. Bad for the birth of a girl or for girls to be married.
17	Thresh grain. Cut beams for house and ships.	The woodcutter can do the cutting.
18	No specific activity.	Falls haphazardly; harmless; brings nothing.
19	No specific activity.	Improves toward the evening.
20	No specific activity.	A great day upon which a man who knows what is right, with a well-guarded mind, is begotten in the fullness of the day.
21	No specific activity.	Best while morning; not as good when evening.**
22	No specific activity.	Falls haphazardly; harmless; brings nothing.
23	No specific activity.	Falls haphazardly; harmless; brings nothing.
24	No specific activity.	Shun troubles that gnaw at the heart (this day can fulfill them). Best while morning; not as good when evening.**
25	No specific activity.	Falls haphazardly; harmless; brings nothing.
26	No specific activity.	Falls haphazardly; harmless; brings nothing.
27	Open jars of wine. Yoke oxen, mules, horses. Launch ships into the sea.	Best for the listed activities. Few men call this day by its true name.
28	No specific activity.	Falls haphazardly; harmless; brings nothing.
29	No specific activity.	Falls haphazardly; harmless; brings nothing.
30	Overlook slaves' work. Allot food for the month.	

KEY

NO
SQUARE

Neutral (mostly)



Favorable



Unfavorable



Mixed—Favorable
& Unfavorable

*Most of the specified activities are for men rather than for women.

** Among translators, there is disagreement regarding the number of the day (or days) found in lines 820-821. Some (West; Most; Tandy and Neale; Frazer) give this day as the twenty-first day; some (Evelyn-White; Lombardo; Athanassakis) as the twenty-fourth day; one (Lattimore) gives "any day after the twentieth."

So ends Item 10, "The Days from Zeus." **See you in Item 11, "General Summary of the *Theogony*."**

Thank you for supporting The Classics Cave.

You'll find books, readings, workouts, and more at www.theclassicscave.com. **Do you want to support the Cave's mission?** Let's talk! Contact Tim Young at tim@theclassicscave.com to sponsor or donate to the Cave.

"Let him hear the advice of Hesiod. . . . The advice of Hesiod is good." — Aristotle

"Lampon . . . greatly honors the sayings of Hesiod, the one he declares and recommends to his sons."
—Pindar

The Classics Cave ▪ www.theclassicscave.com



THE CLASSICS CAVE
The earliest light for a brighter life
www.theclassicscave.com

