

The *Theogony* of Hesiod

Lines 820-885 – Zeus Fights Typhoeus – Zeus Comes to Rule and Nobly Divides the Honors

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"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

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Lines 820-885

Reading 11

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This reading comes from the Cave's
The Best of Hesiod's Theogony & Works and Days
(where it appears as chapter thirteen).

BUT WHEN ZEUS had expelled the Titans from the sky, huge Earth brought Typhoeus, her youngest child, into the world. She did so in an act of love with Tartaros, through the urgings of golden Aphrodite.

There was strength in Typhoeus' hands and in his activities, and the mighty god's feet were untiring. A hundred snake heads grew from his shoulders—those of a terrible dragon, with dark, flickering tongues. And fire flashed from beneath the eyebrows of his awful heads, and fire burned from the crown

of his many heads as he looked upon things. And there were voices in all his terrible heads [830] that uttered every kind of unspeakable voice and sound.

831-835 *Sometimes the gods understand the voices. At other times they are like the sounds of a bull, a lion, a young dog, or a snake. The mountains echo with all the voices.*

836-858 And on that day something extraordinary would have happened, and Typhoeus would have

come to rule over mortals and immortals, if the father of men and gods had not kept a clever lookout. Zeus thundered hard and with might, and the earth [840] resounded fearfully, as did the broad sky from above, and the sea, and Ocean's streams, and Tartaros, the dark caverns within the earth. As Zeus rose up, great Olympus shook beneath the immortal feet of the lord, and the earth groaned. And the purple sea was engulfed with burning heat arising from Zeus' thunder and lightning, and from the fire coming from the monster, and from hurricane winds, and from blazing thunderbolts. And so the whole earth was boiling, as well as the sky and the sea. Long, tall waves raged all along the rocky shore at the forceful attack of the immortals, and an unending quaking arose. [850] And because of the unending noise and grim warfare, Hades, the lord of those rotting beneath the earth, trembled, as did the Titans, who live below in Tartaros with Kronos.

Then when Zeus had raised high his might and had taken up his weapons—thunder and lightning and the smoky thunderbolt—he lunged out from Olympus striking Typhoeus, and he burned up all the awful heads of the terrible monster. It was right then that Zeus overpowered and conquered him, pounding him with blasts. Typhoeus fell down, lame, and the huge earth groaned.

859-867 *As when tin or iron melts at the hands of a craftsman or of Hephaestus, so too did the earth melt at Zeus' fiery blasts.*

[868-885] And vexed in his spirit, Zeus hurled Typhoeus into broad Tartaros.

And from Typhoeus comes the might of the rainy, driving winds—those winds [870] separate from Notos, the South Wind, and Boreas, the North Wind, and Zephyros, the clear West Wind. These three are a family of winds from the gods. They are a great advantage to mortals, while the other gusts of wind blow furiously upon the sea. Raging with harmful whirlwinds, they fall upon the misty sea, a great misery for mortals. The winds blow one way or another depending on the season, scattering ships and destroying sailors. For men there is no defense against this evil when they face these winds upon the sea. The winds also destroy the delightful works of earth-born men—those upon the boundless, flourishing earth—[880] filling the earth with dust and troublesome noise.

But when the blessed gods had finished their toil, and when they had settled by force their struggle with the Titans for honors, then according to the shrewd plans of Earth they encouraged far-seeing Olympian Zeus to be king and to rule over the immortals. And Zeus made a noble division of the honors.

So ends Reading 10, "Zeus Fights Typhoeus – Zeus Comes to Rule and Nobly Divides the Honors." **See you in Reading 12, "Zeus Maintains His Power – His Many Wives, Bed-Partners, and Offspring."**



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