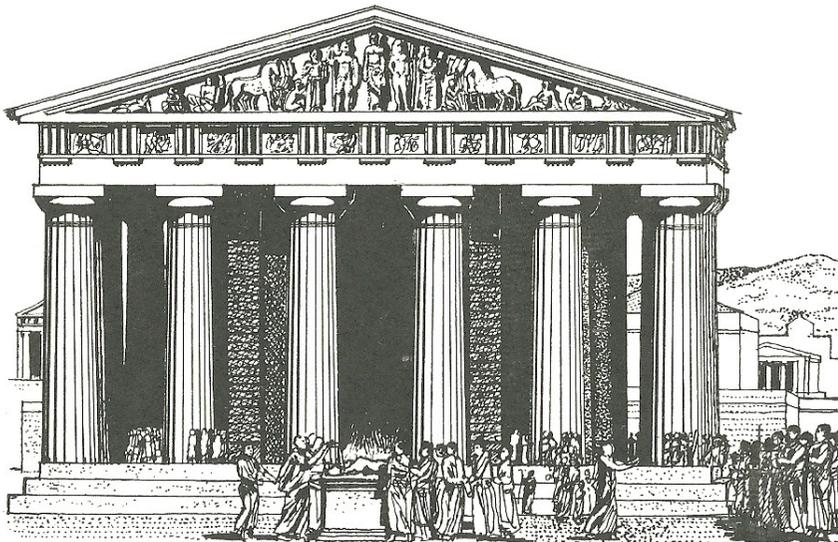


## Ancient Greek temples

### Where to worship the gods

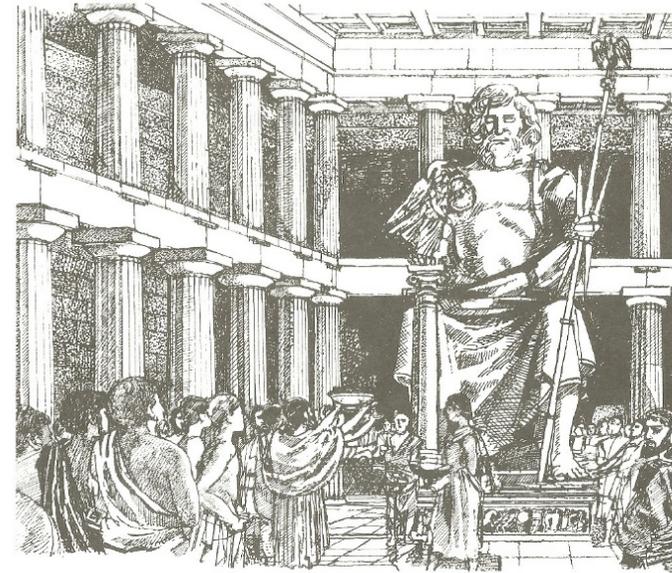
There were many places where the ancient Greeks could give prayers or make offerings to the gods. A house might have a small shrine or figures of gods inside and there was often a small statue of a god at the entrance to the house. People paid their respects near caves, springs or trees where they believed that gods and goddesses lived.

### Houses for the gods



Greek city-states had temples built for the gods and goddesses who were most important to the city. The temple was a house for the god to live in. The cities used their most skilled architects, craftsmen and artists to build and decorate the temples. The picture above shows the outside of the temple of Zeus at Olympia. It is decorated with sculptures that show a story connected with Olympia.

### Inside the temple



The god or goddess lived inside the temple in the form of a statue. Sometimes the statues were huge or made from precious materials; sometimes they were very ancient or had special stories connected to them.

The picture shows the inside of the temple of Zeus at Olympia. The statue of Zeus was made of gold and ivory and was about 13 metres tall.

People might enter a temple to see the statue and make a private prayer or offering. But they did not gather inside to worship. The main ceremonies to honour the gods took place outside their temples. The city's money and treasures were often stored in the temple along with the gifts that worshippers had given to the god or goddess.