

## LESSON 4

### Achilles the Great Warrior

#### Reading

The ancient **Greeks**<sup>(1)</sup> had many great **warriors**<sup>(2)</sup>, but **Achilles**<sup>(3)</sup> was the greatest. He was the son of a king and a **nymph**<sup>(4)</sup>. His mother, **Thetis**<sup>(5)</sup>, wanted Achilles to live **forever**<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, just after his **birth**<sup>2</sup>, she took him to the River **Styx**<sup>(6)</sup>. She held him by the **heel**<sup>3</sup> and put his body into the water. Its special power could protect him from **harm**<sup>4</sup>.

When Achilles was a boy, the gods told Thetis about his future—he would either die in a war and become famous, or grow old and be forgotten. Thetis hoped to keep her son alive, so she didn't want him to go to war. Achilles, however, **grew into** a great soldier. He **longed for fame**<sup>5</sup> and did not **fear**<sup>6</sup> death. He wanted people to remember him as a **hero**<sup>7</sup>.

Achilles went to fight for the Greeks in the long war against **Troy**<sup>(7)</sup>. He killed many Trojan fighters. One of them was **Prince**<sup>8</sup> **Hector**<sup>(8)</sup>, the Greeks' most **dangerous**<sup>9</sup> **enemy**<sup>10</sup>. Achilles tied Hector's body to a **chariot**<sup>(9)</sup> and dragged him in front of the walls of Troy. **In this way**, he deeply **angered**<sup>11</sup> the god **Apollo**<sup>(10)</sup>, the **guardian**<sup>12</sup> of Troy.

Later in the war, Hector's younger brother **Paris**<sup>(11)</sup> shot an **arrow**<sup>13</sup> from the city walls. Apollo **guided**<sup>14</sup> it toward Achilles' heel **on purpose**. That was the great warrior's only **weakness**<sup>15</sup>. Thetis did not put his heel into the Styx, so Achilles **died from** the **wound**<sup>16</sup>. Now, we use the phrase "Achilles' heel" to **describe**<sup>17</sup> a **fatal**<sup>(12)</sup> weakness in a person or thing.

古希臘人有許多偉大的戰士，但阿基里斯是其中之最。他是一位國王和仙女所生的兒子。他的母親塞諦斯希望阿基里斯永生不死。因此，她在他剛出生不久，就把他帶到冥河，捉著他的腳跟，將他的身體浸到水中。河水特殊的力量可以保護他免受傷害。

當阿基里斯還是個孩子，眾神告訴塞諦斯有關他將來的命運，他要不是死於戰爭而揚名天下，就是漸漸老去而遭人遺忘。塞諦斯希望自己的兒子可以活下去，所以她不希望他去打仗。然而，阿基里斯長大後，卻變成一個偉大的戰士。他渴望名聲，不懼怕死亡。他希望自己在人們的記憶中是一位英雄。

阿基里斯加入希臘人的行列，開始跟特洛伊長期作戰。許多特洛伊的戰士死在他的手下，其中之一是赫克特王子，他是希臘人的頭號公敵。阿基里斯把赫克特的屍體綁在一輛戰車上，在特洛伊的城牆前面拖行。這樣一來，深深地激怒了特洛伊城的守護神阿波羅。

戰爭後期，赫克特的弟弟帕里斯從城牆上射出一箭。阿波羅故意導引它向著阿基里斯的腳跟去，那正是這位偉大戰士的唯一弱點。塞諦斯沒把他的腳跟浸到冥河中，阿基里斯就因為這個傷口而死了。現在，我們常用「阿基里斯的腳跟」一詞來形容一個人或事物的致命要害。