

Intro to Biography: I have chosen Zeno of Citium and I think that he is someone who lived his life with nothing but **purpose**. I believe this is the most important trait that someone can take from him and I will be using that as my main focus of my biography. He is the founder of the Stoic philosophical belief system and I shall tell the story of Zeno from the viewpoint of an Athenian biographer known as **Adoribus**.

Zeno of Citium was born in the Phoenician-Greek city of Citium c. 336 BCE. which coincidentally was the same year that Alexander the Great ascended to the throne of Macedonia (talk about being born in such a purposeful year). His father was an active merchant in primarily Athens and Zeno followed suit once he was of age to take up his father's mantle. He was a successful merchant up until his shipwrecked on the way to Athens. While waiting to return to Citium, he began to read Xenophon's *Memorabilia* and was so enthralled with Socrates that he gave up on being a merchant there and then. He decided that his purpose was to be a philosopher and nothing else from then on. **(AHE)**

He knew in order to be a successful philosopher that he had to study under the best of the best of philosophers of the time. He first studied under Crates of Thebes, a very well known philosopher, and from there became the pupil of both Stilpo the Megarian and Polemo. Zeno knew that each of them could instill in him the knowledge and experience to live the purposeful life he knew he wanted to live. Even at such a young age, Zeno was wise beyond his years and did not let that shipwreck stop him from living a fulfilling life. He's such an inspiration isn't he? After studying under these philosophers, he remained in Athens as a teacher for the remainder of his life as he felt that the shipwreck left him there for a reason. **(AHE and OCD)**

He strove to teach the Athenian youth the importance of *Logos* (Universal Reason), physics/metaphysics, and ethics which all became the 3 Pillars of Stoicism. He wanted them to know that everyone's life was valuable and the importance of not wasting a moment. Zeno believed that reason was the main purpose of human life and that living in accordance with reason allowed for one to truly have a worthwhile existence. He dedicated his life to spreading this message to anyone and everyone he could to do what we could for others. **(OCD)**

Zeno remained as a philosophical teacher in Athens until one fateful day in c. 265 BCE. He was leaving for the day after a busy day of educating Athenians when he tripped coming out of his school and broke a toe. He lied on the ground for a moment, realized that this was a sign that his life was complete, uttered "I come of my own accord; why call me thus?," and strangled himself. Somehow he knew that his soul was telling him that his purpose on this Earth was fulfilled and that it was time for him to move on. Talk about a man with wisdom simpletons like us can only dream of. Rest in peace my favorite philosopher, Zeno of Citium. **(AHE and OCD)**