

Odyssey essay

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Odyssey Essay Jared Page A heroic person is who does courageous acts for the sake of his family and peers. In the epic poem, *The Odyssey* by Homer, the protagonist, Odysseus, has not been a heroic person throughout the poem. Odysseus, Son of Laertes, has journeyed off with his crew in search of returning home but has not met the requirements of being a hero. Instead he shows insensitivity toward others, disloyalty and untrustworthiness. One characteristic trait that Odysseus presents is insensitivity towards his crew members. An example of this is when Odysseus and his men are trapped in the Cyclopes cave, Odysseus says “ Now came the time to toss for it: who ventured along with me? Whose hand could bear to thrust and grind that spike in Cyclops eye” (279). This shows that Odysseus fails to sympathize with what his members are feeling. For this reason, Odysseus decides who will help him brawl Cyclops with a toss of a coin. By tossing the coin versus making the decision himself is an example that indicates Odysseus does not show the ability to be a heroic leader. . Each time when Odysseus does something wrong, the Gods, particularly Zeus, would inflict adversity because of Odysseus’s actions. For example, just after wanting to depart the island, Zeus “ disdained the offering: destruction for my ships he had in shore and death for those who sailed them, my companions” (512). This shows Odysseus has disobeyed Zeus; leading him to destroy his ships and crewmembers. Proving that Odysseus is endangering them by his absence of feeling towards others. Not only does Odysseus lack feeling, but also is untrustworthy to his peers. Odysseus has many conflicts as to whether or not he is a trustworthy person. An example of this is when the Cyclops asks why Odysseus is in his cave, Odysseus answers “ He thought he’d find out, but I

saw through this and answered with a ready lie: My ship? Poseidon. Lord. Who set the earth a tremble..." (226). This shows that Odysseus will lie his way out of things. A hero should be honest towards other people and not lie to achieve what he wants. Another conflict that Odysseus has with his men is when sailing towards Scylla. Odysseus says to himself " But as I sent them on towards Scylla. I told them nothing, as they could do nothing" (785). This proves that he cannot be trusted if he chooses to leave his men to find out for themselves what Scylla is. Odysseus has not only been untrustworthy to his men, but also disloyal to his family. Disloyalty is the act of being unfaithful to a person or country. Odysseus has showed this many times throughout the poem. An instance of this is when he has secret relations with Circe even though married. " Circe, persuades Odysseus to stay, share her meat and wine, and restore his heart" (1054). This shows that Odysseus has cheated on his wife while out at sea. This proves that Odysseus is unfaithful to his wife and family. While Odysseus's men kill a ram, Zeus punishes them by a thunderbolt, killing everyone but Odysseus, " The dangerous nymph Calypso lives and sings there, in her beauty and she received me, loved me" (985). This shows that Odysseus has sailed away without his men and goes back to Calypso. Showing how Odysseus is disloyal to his crew, leaving their bodies and only caring about himself. Odysseus has many good characteristics that he shows throughout his journey, but none of them exhibit heroism. Dragging his crewmembers into his own faults by the Gods, being a untrustworthy leader, and a bad husband to his wife are all just examples of these qualities. Overall in this epic poem, Odysseus was not a good nor heroic leader.