

The journey of a king

[Literature](#), [Mythology](#)



The Journey of a King In Homer's epic poem, "The Odyssey", Telemachus and Odysseus set out on their own journeys to become men; as a result, they become patient, brave, and honorable men. Odysseus has bravery, which makes him a good king, but fools can be brave too, so how is Odysseus any better than a fool? This is why he goes out in search of honor and patience. Telemachus has the patience, but he is not brave enough to stand up to the suitors and to gain respect from them. Therefore Telemachus goes out in search of bravery and honor. Any one of these traits, patience, bravery, and honor, are all fine and good, but when one has all three, it makes for a great king. Telemachus can not and will not face the suitors to take his rightful place as the king of Ithaca. In fact, he is wishing for his father to come home and redeem Ithaca. "He could almost see his magnificent father, here... in the mind's eye—if only he might drop from the clouds and drive these suitors all in a rout throughout the halls and regain his pride of place and rule his own domains!" (Homer, ch. 1). Meanwhile, Odysseus is stuck on Calypso's island, moping around on the beach and crying for his family (Homer, ch. 5), but his need of humbleness comes long before this point in time. In the Cyclopes cave, Odysseus plays a great trick on Polyphemus by telling him that his name is "Nobody". He could have gotten away scot-free if he had not proclaimed his real name to be Odysseus to the son of Poseidon as he is sailing away on the sea (Homer, ch. 9). Now Poseidon, a god who rules the seas and oceans, is holding a good grudge on him, and he is not even sailing in the right direction (map of Odysseus' Heroic Journey in Mrs. Lobello's study packet). For the sake of Ithaca, Odysseus better not teach Telemachus his ways of pride. What Telemachus naturally has that Odysseus does not

have is patience. How many times has one seen Odysseus willingly fall asleep for the night? The answer is none because "Athena showers sleep upon his eyes" every time (Homer, ch. 5). Telemachus, unlike his father, is very patient. As he decides to sail off to Troy and Pylos one night, he chooses to wait and talk out his decision with Eurycleia and Mentor before leaving (Homer, ch. 2). When Telemachus arrives at Pylos and have dinner in King Nestor's palace, he waits a while to admit that he really is the son of Odysseus and the prince of Ithaca (Homer, ch. 3). It's hard to believe that Telemachus would be the son of Odysseus now, because they are almost exactly the opposite, other than their looks. Honor is the one thing that both Odysseus and Telemachus need; honor and respect come hand-in-hand. So if the suitors have any respect for Telemachus, they will honor him and let Telemachus and Penelope take their time in choosing a husband without any rush or stress. Before the Trojan War, Odysseus is a pretty good king, but he is not any better than the suitors because he hasn't been his people's ideal hero. The people of Ithaca like Odysseus and respect him, but the history does not say that the people honor Odysseus. Calypso, Circe, and Nausicaa each have a level of respect and honor for Odysseus because although they all want Odysseus to be their husband, they know that he has a wife and family back in Ithaca. So they let Odysseus go away after they all get to keep him for a while. Odysseus and Telemachus's honor has got to be, arguably, the most important trait in their being a king or leader. Odysseus and Telemachus return back to Ithaca as new and improved men and as rulers of Ithaca. Telemachus finally has the guts to step up to be the man of the house, as he orders his own mother to go to her room (Homer, ch. 20).

Telemachus even has the nerve to talk to the suitors like he is their boss. When one of the suitors tells Telemachus to make Penelope choose a husband, Telemachus says " I do not delay my mother's marriage, not a moment [...] I shrink from driving mother from our house, issuing harsh commands against her will. God forbid it ever comes to that!" (Homer, ch. 20). Before Telemachus goes on his journey, he agrees one hundred percent to do what they tell him, but Telemachus is now a man with power over the suitors. When it is time for Odysseus to come out of hiding in his beggar form, he attacks the suitors, starting with Antinous, then making the suitors plead for forgiveness before they were all killed. Now the people of Ithaca have a much higher fear and respect for King Odysseus, now than ever before the Trojan War. Now Odysseus, Telemachus, and the servants have all done a heroic deed worthy of honor, for Penelope and the people of Ithaca. If either Odysseus or Telemachus had not gone on their hero's journey, the numbers of the suitors would have easily overcome both of them. Evil would have won over good for the first time in Ithaca. Odysseus and Telemachus would have been killed at their own homecoming right in front of Penelope and their own people. Odysseus and Telemachus's story would have been ruined, and the readers' time would have been wasted on reading this " epic" poem. Without the traits of bravery, patience, and honor that the two men picked up on their journeys, Odysseus and Telemachus would have made a small difference for the kingdom, for Ithaca, or for themselves. Since Odysseus and Telemachus beat the suitors, and gained bravery, patience, and honor, they became great kings of Ithaca, living a

happily ever after ending. Works Cited Homer. The Odyssey. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Penguin, 2002. iBooks file.