

Odysseus and supernatural beings

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Odysseus and Supernatural Beings Throughout Homer's *Odyssey*, there are many supernatural beings that interact with Odysseus. These beings play an important role as either advisors, temptations or foes to Odysseus.

Throughout his journey he is confronted with conflicts where he is either helped or hindered by these supernatural beings. Below are some examples of the beings that either helped or hindered Odysseus during his journey.

The goddess Athena, goddess of wisdom and war, is the most powerful intelligent and influential woman in Odysseus's life. She is always at his side.

She speaks on behalf of Odysseus, telling Zeus, her father, that her heart breaks for forlorn Odysseus. Odysseus longs to see the curls of smoke rising from his home fires in Ithaca, she says, but Calypso will not loosen her hold on him. She reminds Zeus that Odysseus dedicated many burnt offerings to him at Troy. Swayed by her words, Zeus sends the messenger god, Hermes, to Calypso's island with a command to release Odysseus. Athena aids Odysseus in many ways throughout his entire journey, like when she changes the course of events that take place when he first meets the princess Nausicaa of Phaeacia.

Athena changes the course of the ball that the girls are throwing so that it falls on Odysseus and wakes him up, leading him to meet Nausicaa. Many times Athena convinces Zeus and the other Gods that Odysseus is worth saving. Perhaps the most formidable foe of Odysseus is the sea god Poseidon, who continually attempts to thwart the efforts of Odysseus to make a safe journey home. On one of Odysseus adventures he angers the great sea god, Poseidon, by blinding his son, Polyphemus, king of a race of one-eyed giants who inhabit the island of Sicily.

In retaliation, Poseidon relentlessly torments Odysseus after he leaves Sicily, imperiling his voyage at every turn. He is aware that he cannot kill nor stop Odysseus but continues his efforts to make Odysseus journey throughout the story full of peril. An example of Poseidon's wrath is seen as soon as he arrives back from Ethiopia and spots Odysseus making passage towards Phaeacia, he says, " Just look at him there, nearing Phaeacia's shores where he's fated to escape his noose of pain that's held him until now.

Still my hopes ride high-I'll give that man his swamping fill of trouble," Poseidon attacks Odysseus with a giant wave, and destroys his newly crafted raft. Odysseus survives with the help of the sea nymph Ino . The beautiful goddess Calypso who falls in love with Odysseus after he washes ashore on her island. Calypso, by means of enchantment, holds him prisoner there for seven years. Calypso used trickery and deceit to have possession over Odysseus. She was a beautiful nymph with a wonderful voice.

Calypso uses these advantages to get what she wants. Calypso tries to make Odysseus her husband and asks him if he would want to be immortal by staying on the island with her. Odysseus tells her " I each day I long for home, long for the sight of home.... " In the end, the Gods overpower Calypso into letting him go, but she still demonstrates the god's idea as if it was her own. She tells him " O forlorn man, be still. Here you need grieve no more; you need not feel your life consumed here; I have pondered it, and I shall help you go.... In the end, she helps Odysseus after releasing him by providing him a raft and provisions to help him on his way without incident if the gods wish it. In conclusion, Odysseus, a mortal, is both helped and

hindered by these supernatural beings. He encounters the wrath of Poseidon numerous times throughout his travels. He was held captive by Calypso on her island while longing for home. The Goddess Athena guided and protected him the most throughout his travels. Without the aid of these supernatural beings, the journey of Odysseus would not have been the brave, courageous, and risky adventure that it was.