

The odyssey assignment

Literature



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Nothing can be more life changing than when a God or Goddess chooses to interact with a mortal man. Much of Greek mythology describes the natures of these interactions. In *The Odyssey*, Gods and Goddesses play a major role during Odysseus' journey home. He had some gods on his side and others against him. Some were even on his side at one time, but did something to hurt him another time. No matter where he went a God or Goddess was always watching over him. For good or for evil, while Odysseus was on his voyage, Athena, Poseidon, and Zeus all played major roles in his journey home to Ithaca.

It begins when fighting in the Trojan War against the Trojans for 10 years; Odysseus has begun seeking his wife, Penelopeia. In *The Odyssey*, Zeus, Athena, and Poseidon impact Odysseus' homecoming. To begin with, in *The Odyssey*, Zeus impacts Odysseus' homecoming. In Book five, Zeus impacts Odysseus' journey by sending Hermes to persuade Calypso, the nymph who held Odysseus prisoner for seven years in her cave, to set Odysseus free. When Zeus informs Hermes of his assignment, "Hermes you are my messenger and here is an errand for you.

Go and declare to Calypso our unchangeable will, that Odysseus shall return after all his troubles" he is explicit on his instructions (Homer 62). Zeus is all-powerful and whatever he says is done. When he sends word through Hermes to Calypso to release Odysseus, she departs with very little hesitation. Hermes continues, "... put[ing] on his fine shoes, those golden incorruptible shoes which used to carry him over moist and dry to the ends of the earth, swift as the breath of the winds.

He took up the staff which lays a spell on men's eyes if he wills, or wakens the sleeping" (Homer 63). He meets Calypso in her cave, " with her beautiful hair flowing over her shoulders" and " a great fire blazed on the hearth, and the burning logs of cedar and juniper wafted their fragrant scent far over the island" where they recognized each other right away (Homer 63). Hermes goes on to explain that Odysseus shall be set free, ".. For it is not his fate to perish in this place far from his friends.

It is decreed that he shall see his friends again, and return to his tall house and his native land" (Homer 64). Calypso admires Hermes bravery and grants Zeus' wish for Odysseus to be set free. Calypso bestows upon Odysseus uplifting news brought upon Calypso via Zeus, " I will gladly advise him and help him to get home" (Homer 65). Calypso agrees to let Odysseus go and Calypso helps Odysseus build a raft and have him on his way back home. Zeus impacts

Odysseus' journey by telling Hermes to persuade Calypso into releasing Odysseus. Zeus aids in Odysseus' journey by giving Hermes instruction to command Calypso to let Odysseus go, so he could complete his voyage home. On the contrary, Zeus hinders Odysseus' journey when he turns Odysseus' ship, which brings him ashore Ithaca, into stone. As Odysseus is on his way to Ithaca, with a ship, men to run the ship, food, and drink given to him by the Phaicians, Odysseus falls asleep and wakes up in what he does not know is Ithaca.

Furious that someone has assisted Odysseus in his journey, Poseidon goes on to ask Zeus if he can turn Odysseus' ship into stone, due to Odysseus'

actions toward Poseidon's son Zeus agrees and tells Poseidon to, " Wait till the ship is running in, and the whole city is gazing at the sight, and turn it into stone close to the shore, and let the stone keep the shape of a ship that all the world may wonder; then raise a ring of high mountains about the city" (Homer 151). Poseidon then goes " straight to Scheria, and there he waited. As the ship came sailing in at full speed, the Earthshaker turned it into stone" (Homer 151).

These actions taken by Poseidon due to Zeus' instructions, holds back Odysseus' journey of getting home to his wife, Penelopeia. In addition to Zeus, Athena also provides divine aid to Odysseus on his journey to Ithaca. Athena assists Odysseus when he arrives in Ithaca and does not recognize the land. Athena goes on to explain the landscape, " This is the harbour of Phorcys the Old Man of the Sea; this is the olive tree with its long leaves; this is the vaulted cave where you have offered so many solemn sacrifices to the nymphs; there is Neriton hill covered with woods" so Odysseus comes to recognize the island as Ithaca (Homer 155).

Athena also assists Odysseus when she disguises him as an old vagabond, so the suitors do not harm him. Athena disguises him so know no one will know him she says she will, " shrivel up the sound of flesh of that muscular body, I will sweep off the brown crop from your head, I will wrinkle up those beautiful eyes, I will give you rags to wear which any one would be sick to see on a human being, and you shall see like a shabby vagabond to the proud gallants, and even your own wife and son" (Homer 156). Athena disguised Odysseus from the suitors so they would not recognize him or harm him in any way.

Odysseus' main concern is getting back to his wife, Penelopeia and son, Telemachus. Without Athena's assistance Odysseus would still be on the island of Calypso, Ogygia and would not be able to fulfill this destination. Also, Athena impacts Odysseus' journey by defending Odysseus when the Gods gather to discuss mortal men. The Gods and Goddesses were conversing how mortal men blame everything on the Gods/Goddesses. Aggravated and bothered, Athena interrupts the discussion, " But what about that clever Odysseus? defending Odysseus' contributions to the men, that have rudely slipped their minds (Homer 62). Without Athena's assistance Odysseus would still be on the island of Calypso, Ogygia. If it were not for Athena, daughter of Zeus, Odysseus would not be able to overcome the challenges he faced from Poseidon (the God of the Sea), Helios (the sun god), Calypso (the goddess-nymph), and Circe (the goddess and enchantress) during his journey home. As well as Zeus and Athena, Poseidon assists Odysseus on his voyage back home.

When Odysseus and his men are on the island of the Cyclops, Poseidon's anger arises. Hungry and tired, the men and Odysseus strolled into a cave filled with sheep and cheese. Upon leaving, the cave's resident, Polyphemus, approached the men and Odysseus and greeted them with a fake hug and ends up eating two of the men and trapping Odysseus and the others. Being clever and swift as Odysseus is he quickly formulates a plan which consists of asking the Cyclops to drink a cup of wine, " Cyclops, here, have a drink that after that jolly meal of mansmutton!

I should like to show you what drink we had on board our ship. I brought it as a drink-offering for you, in the hope that you might have pity and help me on <https://assignbuster.com/the-odyssey-assignment-essay-samples/>

my way home” (Homer 107). He drank it and soon asked for another drink, and another which caused him to become drunk. This was Odysseus’ perfect time to fight back, he took the pole and “ as soon as the wood was on the point of catching fire, and glowed white-hot, green as it was, I drew it quickly out of the fire while my men stood around me and the men took hold of the stake, and thrust the sharp point into his eye” (Homer 107).

This caused Poseidon to become furious being that Polyphemus is Poseidon’s son. Realizing the only way to get out of this cave is to move the stone blocking the entrance, and the only one who can move it was Polyphemus, Odysseus does not kill him. Odysseus tells him to move the stone and Polyphemus, being drunk and in agony, moves the stone and frees Odysseus and his men. In great joy, Odysseus reminds Polyphemus of the one who takes his eye out, him. Poseidon hears this and is enraged with anger.

Considering Polyphemus is Poseidon’s son, Poseidon becomes enraged with Odysseus which impacts Odysseus’ journey, significantly. Furthermore, Poseidon impacts Odysseus’ journey when he sends a great big storm while Odysseus is making his way to Scheria. Odysseus has been at sea for eighteen days when Poseidon notices him. Still enrages about his son, Poseidon, “ roused all the tempestuous winds, and covered in the clouds both land and sea; night rushed down from the heavens.

East wind and South wind dashed together, West wind blowing hard and North wind from the cold heights, rolling up great billows” brought fright to Odysseus (Homer 69). His ship was soon hit by a wave that caused his vessel to spin, “ he lost hold of the steering-oar, and fell out into the water; the

mast snapped in the middle as the fearful tempest of warring winds fell upon it; sail and yard were thrown from the wreck" he was weighed down by his clothes underwater, but came up and caught his raft and sat in the middle.

Ino, the daughter of Cadmos, saw him struggling and pitied him and presented him with a veil to float upon until he reached dry land. Poseidon forced Odysseus' journey to be influenced by giving him obstacles to overcome. Though Odysseus overcame them, with the help of other Gods and Goddesses, Poseidon still impacted Odysseus' journey immensely.