

Homer sea, wanted  
to destroy odysseus  
(book



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Homer (Odyssey)The classic epic The Odyssey and the Old Testament show manydifferences in the Greek and Hebrew religions. The Greek religion ispolytheistic and the Hebrew religion is monotheistic. In comparing thenature of the gods there are many differences. In comparing therelationships between Odysseus and Athena on one hand, and Job and God onthe other, we can discern differences between the religious attitudes ofthe Greeks and Hebrews. These differences include, one God versus many, and childish gods versus a loving God. In Homer’s Odyssey, Odysseus deals with many Gods while in the OldTestament Job deals with one God.

Homer states, “ the master of heaven andhigh thunder, Zeus, went to his place among the Gods”(101). This is areference that the Greek religion is a polytheistic religion. The quotecontinues to state that Athena forewarns Odysseus of the “ woes” that hewill encounter (101). She proceeds to warn him because she cares abouthim.

Athena cares about Odysseus just as God cares about Job. Godrespects Job, for he says, “ no one on earth is like him-he is a truly goodperson, who respects me and refuses to do evil” (Job 1. 8). Because Job hasnever done anything to disrespect God, God loves Job and doesn’t want anyharm to happen to him. Although the books are different, the concern thegods have for their people is similar. Greek gods acted in a childish manner some of the time.

Poseidon, the God of the sea, wanted to destroy Odysseus (Book V). His actions wereimmature and uncalled for because he is supposed to be a god, which is nothow he behaved. The gods are also jealous. Calypso states, “ a

hard-hearted lot you are, you gods, and as jealous as jealous can be!"(bookV). If the gods are supposed to be rulers then why are they jealous? Jealousy is not a godly trait.

One can see in the Old Testament that the Hebrew God is never jealous. When conversing with Satan, God says, " All right, Satan, do what you want with anything that belongs to him, but don't harm Job"(Job1. 12). God is not jealous because first of all, that is not his nature. Secondly, he knows that Job is his loyal servant. In the two books the gods act differently according to their nature.

In conclusion, it is important to notice the differences and similarities in the two pieces of literature. The relationships between Odysseus and Athena and Job and God are similar in some ways. Both Athena and God care for their loyal subjects.

In the Odyssey there are different gods and in the Old Testament there is only one God. Some of the gods in the Odyssey have childish traits, while in the Old Testament, God acts in a godly fashion.