

Odysseus



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Odyssey, written by Homer, tells the story of Odysseus and how he faced misfortune in his attempts to return home after the Trojan War. Odysseus is not

famous for his great strength or bravery, but for his ability to deceive and trick.

To his friends, he was a brilliant strategist. To his enemies, he was a deceiver and a manipulator of the worst kind.

During his journeys Odysseus often makes the mistake of bragging to his enemies but

learns that doing this gives his enemies a chance to seek revenge against him. After

leaving Troy, Odysseus attacks the land of the Cicones. Instead of leaving after

his victory he stays to celebrate until a force is gathered against him. He must then flee after

many of his men are killed. Afterwards Odysseus and his crew land on the island of the

Cyclops. They are attacked and some of the men are eaten by Polyphemus. After getting

the giant Cyclops drunk, Odysseus and his men blind the monster with a spear in his one eye.

The men could have made an escape without misfortune but Odysseus

mocked Polyphemus

and shouted out his real name, when before Odysseus had told Polyphemus that his name

was " Noman." With this new information Polyphemus prays to his father, Peoeidon,

to have Odysseus and his men punished. Because he angered Peoeidon, Odysseus must

wander throughout the sea while his men slowly die one by one. Odysseus learns that

bragging can have ill effects and uses this knowledge on the island of Phaecians and

Ithaca when he does not openly brag about his deeds and his journeys.

Odysseus also learns to pay close attention to the instructions of the gods, or he

might hve to face a terrible price. when Odysseus and his crew landed at the island of

Aeolus, they were given a parting gift that would have helped if they had paid attention

to the warnings of Aeolus. He gave Odysseus a bag full of the bad winds that would

keep them from their home of Ithaca. Odysseus and his cre were in sight of the

homeland they had waited so long to see, when a hand of rebel crewmen opened the bag.

because they thought it contained treasures, creating a great gale that blew them back to

Aeolus. When Aeolus saw this he believed that Odysseus was cursed and banished him

from the island. this is not the only time Odysseus was betrayed by his men and suffered

a great price. When they landed on the island of Hyperion, bad winds prevented them

from leaving. Food soon became low, and when Odysseus was asleep, the crew killed

the cows of Hyperion against the god's warnings. Hyperion was enraged to see this and

had all of Odysseus' men killed in a great storm. After the storm all Odysseus had

left was his own strength and the favor of Athena. Odysseus learned that the gods

must be respected in order for any man to succeed.

During his journey Odysseus used what he has learned from his mistakes to return

home and kill the suitors of his wife. On the island of Cicones, and with his encounter with Polyphemus, Odysseus learned that bragging can bring great misfortune.

On Ithaca Odysseus never brags to the suitors and is able to enter his house

with the

Antinous and the other suitors knowing his real identity. He takes the punishment of

Antinous and the other suitors without saying a word and is able to see those who have

invaded his house. Odysseus is able to see who is loyal and who is not and take

his revenge with the suitors never knowing who he was until the final moment. Odysseus

also learned to respect the gods. When he landed on Aesea, the island of Circe, he

follows the instructions give to him by Hermes so that he can overcome Circe and fre

his men. Odysseus follows the instructions that Circe had given him very closely,

entering and leaving Hades without misfortuen and using was in the ears of his crew

to pass the Sirens. Odysseus becomes a better man thoroughout his journeys and is able

to return to his homeland to regain his kingdom.

After spending years with the goddess Calypso, Odysseus is offered a choice of either

living on the island with Calypso and becoming immortal like the gods, or he could return to his

wife and country and be mortal like the rest. He chooses to return home. The Odyssey has a noticeable theme, it is the nature of mortal life, why any human being would, if offered the chance to be a god, still choose to be mortal. The choice becomes apparent when Odysseus meets the ghost of Achilles in the Underworld. Odysseus remarks to Achilles how all the shades of the dead must worship and serve Achilles, but Achilles replies that he would rather be the meanest and most obscure slave of the poorest landholder than be the most famous of the dead. Much of the book deals with the nature of human civilization and human slavery.

Throughout his wanderings for home, Odysseus becomes a humbler and more respectful man. The once boastful man learns that his bragging can turn people against him, and is quieter than before he left for Troy. He also learns that the immortal gods of Olympus can be merciful and bring great fortune, but they also punish those that disobey their wishes. Every time Odysseus had not been respectful he has been

severely punished

and his trip home delayed. Out of this great tragedy he has become a

greater man to

regain his kingdom and live a long life.