

# [The a mortal and cannot accomplish all](https://assignbuster.com/the-a-mortal-and-cannot-accomplish-all/)

The Odysseyis an epic poem by Homer about the 20-year journey of a war hero’s homecoming. Odysseus can be seen as the typical epic hero, but has contradicting characteristicsand actions that challenge his heroism. Odysseus is a noble leader withsuperhuman strength, and wit, but along the journey shows himself to bearrogant, sly and dependent on the gods. Thereis no doubt Odysseus is a hero as he overcomes a god’s obstacles on his journeyhome from a successful war and saves his family from wretched suitors. Odysseusabove all is a strong warrior. Menelaus, a comrade in arms from Troy, speakshighly of Odysseus to Telemachus, as he “ never once laid eyes on a man like him…thehero that dared and carried off in a wooden horse” ready to bring Troy toan end (Homer, Odyssey, 4. 302-306).

Odysseus demonstrates his bravery and wit by filling a wooden horse with hismen and leading them to infiltrate Troy’s walls. Not only is he a good leader, but he takes care of his men. After his men go behind his back and release thesack of winds gifted to him by King Aeolus, they come upon a mysterious land, and Odysseus sends off men to explore. Only Eurylochus returns with news thatthe men have been held captive by goddess Circe and advices Odysseus to setsail at once. Although they have betrayed him, the king refuses as “ necessitydrives him on” (Odyssey, 10. 300).

Odysseusputs himself at risk in order to save the trapped men and bring them home. Theking also has a strong mind on his shoulders. Poseidon finds his ship onceagain and has left Odysseus in the middle of the sea with no way out. But at last he fought his way to thesurface spewing bitter brine, streams of it pouring down his head. Buthalf-drowned as he was, he’d not forget his craft- he lunged after her throughthe breakers, laying hold and huddling amidships, fled the stroke of death(Odyssey, 5. 355-359)Odysseus is hit hard but uses every bit of strength leftinside of him to keep on swimming and get to land once more.  Asmighty as he is, Odysseus is still a mortal and cannot accomplish all victoriesthrough his sole talents. Thus, many times the Gods lend a helping hand to theking.

When Odysseus decides to rescue his men at Circe’s palace, the gods knowOdysseus does not stand a chance against Circe’s magic. Hermes comes to therescue and tells Odysseus “ I can save you, free you from that great danger./ Look, here is a potent drug…/its power alone will shield you from the fatal day”(Odyssey, 10. 317-319). Hermes givesOdysseus a magic herb that will counteract any spells Circe sets upon him andadvice on what he must do to get his men back without falling into Circe’senchantment.

Without this help, Odysseus would not have been successful andended up an animal like his other comrades. Circe tries to trick Odysseus ontheir first encounter but before he heads out, she tells him what path to take. Without this information, he would Moreover, it is thanks to the gods whopermitted Odysseus to be able to return home. By stabbing Cyclops Polyphemus’seye, Odysseus angered Poseidon, his father, and got him and his crew cursed.

Ashe is the god of the sea, he does everything in his power to delay the men’svoyage home, and no other gods intervene. It is the goddess Athena who pleadsOdysseus’s case to the almighty Zeus, her father, and gets her father to saythat “ he shall see his loved ones,/ reach his high-roofed house, his nativeland at last” (Odyssey, 5. 45-46). It is through the gods intervention ofPoseidon’s punishment and their guidance that Odysseus makes it home. Yet, it is Odysseus’s own arrogance why it takes him twenty years to land on theshores of Ithaca once more.