

BOOK 5 – The Odyssey

1. The chapter opens up with the Gods sat down in assembly, and Athene feeling bad for Odysseus, because he is imprisoned in Nymph Calypso's home, so Athene recalls Odysseus' misfortunes to the God's minds. Athene reminds the God's what Odysseus has suffered, how he longs to be home and how his son Telemachus has gone to sacred Pylos and Lacedaemon for news of his father, risking being murdered by his mother's suitors.

Zeus agrees Odysseus should be set free and sends his son Hermes, the messenger to tell Calypso his decision. Hermes tells Calypso the news, and although Calypso is not happy with this decision, she agrees to let Odysseus go, but she informs Hermes, she will not help Odysseus.

Calypso takes Odysseus to the place on the island where the trees grow and tells him to make himself a raft; Calypso gives Odysseus an axe, adze, some other tools, and cloth to make his sail. It took Odysseus 4 days to complete his raft and on the 5th day Calypso packed his raft with wine, water, leather sacks of grain and meat, dressed him in sweet smelling clothes and saw him off the island.

On the seventeenth day, Poseidon, who was on his way back from Ethiopians, caught sight of Odysseus from mountains of Solymi. Seeing Odysseus made him angry because he had a grudge with Odysseus because he had blinded Poseidon's Cyclops son. Poseidon gathered the clouds and stirred up the sea, and summoned the North, West, South and East winds to blow. Waves crashed onto Odysseus raft, Odysseus managed to escape the sea and sit in the middle of his raft. Leucothoe, the once mortal now goddess took pity on Odysseus, she tells Odysseus to take off his heavy clothes, leave his raft for the winds to play with a swim for the Phaeacian coast, she gives him a veil to tie around his wrist, she informs Odysseus it will protect him from injury and death. Whilst Odysseus was deciding whether or not to take Leucothoe's advice, Poseidon sent another wave, tearing his ship into pieces, so Odysseus obey Leucothoe and took off his clothes, tied the veil around his wrist and swam for the Phaeacian coast. At the point Athene intervenes and sends the winds to sleep.

Odysseus swam for two nights and two days and on the third he spotted the land close by. As he struggled away from waves, with the help of Athene he finally reaches land. He makes himself a bed under a bush, and falls to sleep.

2. Epithets used for Zeus:

Zeus the thunderer, the greatest of them all
Gather of the clouds
Zeus who bears the aegis/aegis bearing

Epithets used for Odysseus:

That admirable king
The long enduring
Lion hearted
Dogged by misfortune
The valiant Odysseus
Unhappy friend
The stalwart good Odysseus
Noble

Favourite of Zeus, ingenious Odysseus
Nimble witted
Forlorn and inflicted
Son of Laertes

Epithets used for Athene:

Daughter of Zeus
Bright-eyed Goddess

Epithets used for Hermes

Giant killer
Beloved son
Messenger
Mighty
Hard hearted

3. I think Homer's in-depth description of Calypso's cave and how Odysseus builds his raft, adds to the story, because it give the reader a mental image of the scene, and also certain descriptions reflects the personality of the person. For example, 'This too he skill fully made' shows us Odysseus was a very practical man, and very talented at a number of tasks.
4. Calypso treats Hermes fairly well, she offers him food and drink, and sits him On a polished chair, although she does not give him the normal offering we see in this story of bread, meat, delicacies and wine
5. The God's seem to do what they wish, but Zeus is in charge and he has the final say in decisions. They seem to dislike Goddess' sleeping openly with men and Calypso describes the other God's as 'hard-hearted' and 'unmatched for jealousy', and she seems to think the God's are envious of love and companionship 'and now it is my turn to incur the envy of you God's'.
6. The first time we view Odysseus in this chapter is when he is crying 'but the days found him sitting on the rocks or sands, torturing himself with tears', this Is not the picture we've seen previously of Odysseus, who is always perceived as brave and noble, but I think it separates him from the God's in the way he has human weakness' and emotions, this does not undermine my opinion of Odysseus, but just reminds me, Odysseus is only mortal.
7. Odysseus asks Calypso to swear on oath she will not cast any mischief upon him, because he cannot believe after so long she is freeing him 'Goddess, it is surely not my safety you are thinking about but something else', he suspects her of having other motives, and refuses to board any raft until Calypso swears on oath 'I shall not entrust myself to any raft unless I can count on your good will'.
8. Before Odysseus even knows he is going to be freed from Calypso's island, his fate is already determined by Zeus. Zeus informs Hermes of Odysseus' fate on his journey home, 'and on the twentieth day, after great hardship', Zeus tells us indirectly by the words he uses Odysseus' journey is going to be hard and troublesome 'on the journey he shall have neither Gods nor men help him'.

9. Odysseus sailed on his raft for 17 whole days and it was on the 18th day, Poseidon was to ruin the raft. He navigated his ship by making sure the constellation Wain was always on his left hand. 'The Wain, which always wheels around in the same place and looks across at Orion the hunter with a wary eye. It was this constellation, the only one that never sinks below the horizon to bathe in Ocean's stream, that the wise goddess Calypso had to told him to keep on his left hand as he sailed across the sea'.
10. Seeing Odysseus made Poseidon angry because he had a grudge with Odysseus because Odysseus had blinded Poseidon's Cyclops son Polyphemus and he was also upset the God's changed their mind and set Odysseus free whilst he was away. Poseidon gathered the clouds and stirred up the sea, and summoned the North, West, South and East winds to blow. Waves crashed onto Odysseus raft. 'With that he marshalled the clouds and, seizing his trident in his hands, stirred up the seas'
11. Odysseus is very frightened when Poseidon sends the storm, he tells us he would of rather died on the plains of Troy, in battle, because there he would have had his proper burial rights, which he would not obtain if he dies at sea, 'if only I too could have met my fate and died the Trojan hordes let fly at me with their bronze spears over Achilles! I should at least have had my burial rights'.
12. Leucothoe takes pity on Odysseus during the storms and sets out to help him. She helps him because she was once mortal and sympathises with Odysseus 'poor man' she says to Odysseus as she sits next to Odysseus on his raft and gives him some advice. She tells him to take off his heavy clothes and swim for shore; she gives Odysseus a veil to protect him whilst he swims, from death and injury 'with this divine protection you need not be afraid of injury or death'.
13. Odysseus is afraid that Leucothoe is one of the Gods setting out to trick him and at first does not react to her advice 'I'm afraid this is one of the immortals setting a snare to catch me'.
14. Athene decides to intervene and calms the winds down for Odysseus.
15. When Odysseus came in shouting distance of shore, he heard the thunder of surf on a rocky coast. The seas were battering at the rocky land; there was no where for Odysseus to go, all he could see were jagged rocks sticking out. His dilemma was between trying to land with the chance of being lifted by the sea and dashed into solid rocks or continue to swim further down the coast and risk being dragged further out to sea by the waves. Soon a wave throw him forward towards the rocky shore, with Athene helping him from being crashed into rocks, by putting the idea to cling to a rock with both hands into his mind. He soon swam and soon found himself at the mouth of a river, Odysseus preyed to the God of the stream, his prayer was heard, and the river became calm and the smooth water brought Odysseus to land.

16. Odysseus finds a safe haven under a pair of bushes that kept the winds and rains from penetrating, he gathered up the dry leaves and makes himself a bed under the bushes covering himself with a blanket of leaves.

17. 'the waves like a seagull drenching the feathers of it's wings with spray as it pursues the fish down fearsome troughs of the unharvested deep,

'Who has been in bed wasting away with a long, painful illness, in the grip of some malignant power, passes the crisis by the Gods' will and they know that he will live. Odysseus' happiness was like that when he caught that welcome glimpse of earth and trees.

Homer uses similes to contrast scenes of the story with scenes from normal life, to explain to the reader/play watcher of his day how Odysseus would of felt or to describe the movement of a particular person.