

HOMER



**ODYSSEUS,
THE HERO
OF ITHACA**

Homer

Odysseus, the Hero of Ithaca

**Adapted from the Third Book of the Primary Schools
of Athens, Greece**

EAN 8596547313885

DigiCat, 2022

Contact: DigiCat@okpublishing.info



TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I

PART II

PART III

INTRODUCTION

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LIFE OF THE HERO, ODYSSEUS

CHAPTER I

CHAPTER II

CHAPTER III

CHAPTER IV

THE RETURN OF ODYSSEUS TO HIS OWN COUNTRY

CHAPTER V

CHAPTER VI

CHAPTER VII

CHAPTER VIII

CHAPTER IX

CHAPTER X

CHAPTER XI

CHAPTER XII

CHAPTER XIII

CHAPTER XIV

CHAPTER XV

CHAPTER XVI

CHAPTER XVII

CHAPTER XVIII

CHAPTER XIX

CHAPTER XX

[CHAPTER XXI](#)

[CHAPTER XXII](#)

[CHAPTER XXIII](#)

[CHAPTER XXIV](#)

[CHAPTER XXV](#)

[CHAPTER XXVI](#)

[CHAPTER XXVII](#)

[CHAPTER XXVIII](#)

[THE TRIUMPH OF ODYSSEUS](#)

[CHAPTER XXIX](#)

[CHAPTER XXX](#)

[CHAPTER XXXI](#)

[CHAPTER XXXII](#)

[CHAPTER XXXIII](#)

[CHAPTER XXXIV](#)

[CHAPTER XXXV](#)

[CHAPTER XXXVI](#)

[CHAPTER XXXVII](#)

[CHAPTER XXXVIII](#)

[CHAPTER XXXIX](#)

[CHAPTER XL](#)

[CHAPTER XLI](#)

[CHAPTER XLII](#)

[CHAPTER XLIII](#)

[CHAPTER XLIV](#)

[CHAPTER XLV](#)

[CHAPTER XLVI](#)

[CHAPTER XLVII](#)

[CHAPTER XLVIII](#)

CHAPTER XLIX

CHAPTER L

CHAPTER LI

PART I

Table of Contents

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LIFE OF THE HERO, ODYSSEUS

CHAPTER

- I. About Troy and the Journey of Paris to Greece
 - II. The Flight of Helen
 - III. The Greeks Sail for Troy
 - IV. The Fall of Troy
-

PART II

Table of Contents

THE RETURN OF ODYSSEUS TO HIS OWN COUNTRY

CHAPTER

- V. Odysseus on the Island of Calypso
- VI. Odysseus Constructs a Raft and Leaves the Island
- VII. Odysseus is Saved on the Island of Scheria
- VIII. Nausicaä is Sent to the River by Athena
- IX. Odysseus Arrives at the Palace of Alkinoös
- X. Odysseus in the Halls of Alkinoös
- XI. The Banquet in Honor of Odysseus
- XII. Odysseus Relates His Adventures
- XIII. The Lotus-Eaters and the Cyclops
- XIV. The Cave of the Cyclops
- XV. The Blinding of the Cyclops
- XVI. Odysseus and His Companions Leave the Land of the Cyclops
- XVII. The Adventures of Odysseus on the

Island of Æolus

- XVIII. Odysseus at the Home of Circè
 - XIX. Circè Instructs Odysseus Concerning His Descent to Hades
 - XX. The Adventures of Odysseus in Hades
 - XXI. Odysseus Converses with His Mother and Agamemnon
 - XXII. Conversation with Achilles and Other Heroes
 - XXIII. The Return of Odysseus to the Island of Circè
 - XXIV. Odysseus Meets the Sirens, Skylla, and Charybdis
 - XXV. Odysseus on the Island of Hēlios
 - XXVI. The Departure of Odysseus from the Island of Scheria
 - XXVII. Odysseus Arrives at Ithaca
 - XXVIII. Odysseus Seeks the Swineherd
-

PART III

Table of Contents

THE TRIUMPH OF ODYSSEUS

CHAPTER

- XXIX. [Athena Advises Telemachos](#)
- XXX. [Telemachos Astonishes the Wooers](#)
- XXXI. [Penelope's Web](#)
- XXXII. [The Journey of Telemachos](#)
- XXXIII. [Telemachos in Pylos](#)
- XXXIV. [Telemachos in Sparta](#)
- XXXV. [Menelaos Relates His Adventures](#)
- XXXVI. [The Conspiracy of the Suitors](#)
- XXXVII. [Telemachos Returns to Ithaca](#)
- XXXVIII. [Telemachos and the Swineherd](#)
- XXXIX. [Telemachos Recognizes Odysseus](#)
- XL. [Telemachos Returns to the Palace](#)
- XLI. [Odysseus is Recognized by His Dog](#)
- XLII. [Odysseus Comes, a Beggar, to His Own House](#)
- XLIII. [Conversation of Odysseus and Penelope](#)

- XLIV. [Eurycleia Recognizes Odysseus](#)
 - XLV. [Penelope's Dream](#)
 - XLVI. [Athena Encourages Odysseus](#)
 - XLVII. [The Last Banquet of the Suitors](#)
 - XLVIII. [Odysseus Bends the Bow](#)
 - XLIX. [Death of the Suitors](#)
 - L. [Eurycleia Announces the Return of Odysseus to Penelope](#)
 - LI. [Odysseus Visits His Father](#)
- [Vocabulary and Notes](#)

INTRODUCTION

[Table of Contents](#)

It has long been the opinion of many of the more progressive teachers of the United States that, next to Herakles, Odysseus is the hero closest to child-life, and that the stories from the "Odyssey" are the most suitable for reading-lessons. These conclusions have been reached

through independent experiments not related to educational work in foreign countries.

While sojourning in Athens I had the pleasure of visiting the best schools, both public and private, and found the reading especially spirited. I examined the books in use and found the regular reading-books to consist of the classic tales of the country, the stories of Herakles, Theseus, Perseus, and so forth, in the reader succeeding the primer, and the stories of Odysseus, or Ulysses, as we commonly call him, following as a third book, answering to our second or third reader. This book I brought home with me and had a careful, literal translation made. I submitted this translation to that notable scholar, Zenaïde A. Ragozin, with whom I faithfully traversed the ground, word by word and sentence by sentence. This version I have carefully compared with Bryant and rewritten, making the language as simple as could be consistent with the dignity of the subject-matter.

The introduction to the original book as I found it in Greece contains many interesting points, since it shows that educators in foreign countries, notably in Germany, had come to the same conclusion with our best American teachers. The editor of the little Greek reading-book says:

"In editing this work we have made use not only of Homer's 'Odyssey,' *but also of that excellent reader which is used in the public schools of Germany*, Willman's 'Lesebuch aus Homer.' We have divided the little volume into three parts, the first of which gives a short *resumé* of the war against Troy and the destruction of that city, the second the wanderings of Odysseus till his arrival in Ithaca, the third his arrival and the killing of the wooers. We have no apology to

make in presenting this book to the public as a school-book, since many people superior to us have shown the need of such books in school-work. The new public schools, as is well known, have a mission of the highest importance. They do not aim, as formerly, at absolute knowledge pounded into the heads of children in a mechanical way. Their aim is the mental and ethical development of the pupils. Reading and writing lead but half way to this goal. With all nations the readers used in the public schools are a collection of the noblest thoughts of their authors."

The Greek editor had never read the inane rat and cat stories of American school "readers" when he wrote that. He continues:

"Happily the Greek nation, more than any other, abounds in literary masterpieces. Nearly all of the Greek writings contain an abundance of practical wisdom and virtue. Their worth is so great that even the most advanced European nations do not hesitate to introduce them into their schools. The Germans do this, although their habits and customs are so different from ours. They especially admire Homer's works. These books, above all others, afford pleasure to the young, and the reason for it is clearly set forth by the eminent educator Herbart:

"The little boy is grieved when told that he is little. Nor does he enjoy the stories of little children. This is because his imagination reaches out and beyond his environments. I find the stories from Homer to be more suitable reading for young children than the mass of juvenile books, because they contain grand truths.'

"Therefore these stories are held in as high esteem by the German children as by the Greek. In no other works do children find the grand and noble traits in human life so faithfully and charmingly depicted as in Homer. Here all the domestic, civic, and religious virtues of the people are marvellously brought to light and the national feeling is exalted. The Homeric poetry, and especially the 'Odyssey,' is adapted to very young children, not only because it satisfies so well the needs which lead to mental development, but also for another reason. As with the people of olden times bravery was considered the greatest virtue, so with boys of this age and all ages. No other ethical idea has such predominance as that of prowess. Strength of body and a firm will characterize those whom boys choose as their leaders. Hence the pleasure they derive from the accounts of celebrated heroes of yore whose bravery, courage, and prudence they admire."

The editor further extols the advantages arising from the study of Homer, it making the youthful students acquainted with the earliest periods of Greek history, the manners and customs of the people, and he ends by quoting from Herbart:

"Boys must first get acquainted with the noisy marketplace of Ithaca and then be led to the Athens of Miltiades and Themistokles."

With equal truth the American can say that the child whose patriotism is kindled by the Homeric fire will the more gladly respond to the ideals set forth in the history of a Columbus or a Washington.

MARY E. BURT.

PART I

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LIFE OF THE HERO, ODYSSEUS

[Table of Contents](#)

CHAPTER I

[Table of Contents](#)

ABOUT TROY AND THE JOURNEY OF PARIS TO GREECE

On the northern shore of Asia Minor there lies a plateau watered by many small rivers and surrounded on all sides by mountains, only on the north it slopes gently to the sea. On this plateau, between the Simois and Scamandros rivers, in the oldest times there stood a very rich and powerful city, whose name was Troy. It was the capital of a large and fertile district, known as the Troad.

There, about 1200 B.C., reigned a king by the name of Priam, possessed of great power and boundless wealth. He had many sons and daughters. It was said, indeed, that he had fifty sons who were all married and living in their own homes, which they had built by the king's wish around the royal palace.

They were all handsome and heroic young men. One of the youngest, Paris, also named Alexandros, surpassed the others in beauty. He was a restless youth and not fond of his home, as were the others. He had set his heart on travelling and seeing strange countries and cities. King Priam was extremely fond of his large family, and took pride in having all his children about him, so that at first he was greatly opposed to the wishes of Paris.

But the youth was so persistent and unhappy that the king at last consented to let him go. Without delay, Paris called together a few friends with tastes as adventurous as his own. They embarked in a new ship well provided with all that travellers need, and set sail for the famous land on the shores of the Ægean Sea, of which they had heard so many wonderful things, and which was called Hellas.

Nearly in the middle of the plain which forms the southern part of Hellas was the city of Sparta. It was on the river Eurotas, and was the capital of a large district called Lacedæmon, and it was to this city that Paris came.

Now, there was a mysterious reason for this strange desire of Paris—his passionate longing to travel. In his early youth, while he was still minding his herds on the rich pastures of Mount Ida, he received a visit from the three greatest goddesses of Olympos.

Hera, the queen of Heaven and consort of Zeus—Athena, the goddess of wisdom, and Zeus's favorite daughter—and Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty, had a dispute among themselves.

Each thought herself the most beautiful of the three, and they would have come to high words about it had not Athena proposed that they should ask the handsomest man in the world to settle the question. This happened to be the young royal shepherd, Paris. So the three goddesses floated down to the slope of Mount Ida on a snowy cloud and placed the question before him, each promising to reward him royally if he gave his verdict in her favor.

Paris, as might have been expected, decided in favor of Aphrodite, who had promised him that the fairest woman living in the whole world should be his wife. This promise had to be kept, being given by a goddess, but it was the source of endless misfortune, for Paris had a young and lovely wife who was tenderly attached to him, while the fairest of living women—acknowledged as such by fame in all known countries—was Queen Helen of Sparta, herself the wife of another man.

Her husband was one of the most renowned heroes of Hellas, King Menelaos, a son of Atreus and brother of the leader of the Greek chiefs, Agamemnon, King of Mycenæ. It was Aphrodite, then, who inspired Paris with an insane desire to forsake his parents, brothers, and wife. It was her secret guidance which led him across the seas and through the dangers lurking among the hundreds of islands of the Archipelagos straight to the land of Lacedæmon. This is the central of the three peninsulas in which the Peloponnesus

ends, and might be called the middle finger of that large hand of which Arcadia is the palm.

Paris landed, with all his companions, on the shores of Lacedæmon, where the people received him kindly and helped him on his journey to Sparta, where Menelaos and Helen gave him a cordial welcome.

CHAPTER II

[Table of Contents](#)

THE FLIGHT OF HELEN

Aphrodite, while leading Paris to the shores of Lacedæmon, had not forgotten her promise, and in Sparta itself she was at work at its fulfilment. She inspired Queen Helen with a growing discontent and restlessness of spirit. Menelaos had not noticed any change in her, and it was with an utterly unsuspecting mind that he received the fatal strangers and made them welcome guests in his land and home.

More than that, having heard the news from Crete that his presence there was desirable on account of some urgent business, he did not hesitate to set sail for that island, in the

expectation of finding Paris and his companions still enjoying the hospitality of his palace after a short absence.

This was the chance which wily Aphrodite had contrived for Paris. He took the hint and carried Helen away to his ship, together with as much treasure as they could lay hands on, and then they sailed for Troy. Little did he heed, in his mad desire to call the most beautiful woman in the world his wife, that she was already the wife of a hero who had received him as an honored guest in his house, and that he was about to destroy the peace and honor of his host.

As soon as Menelaos heard of the flight of his wife, he hastened back to Sparta, where he found his palace deserted and his treasure-house robbed.

Then his heart was filled with great wrath. He set out at once to see his brother, Agamemnon, to consult with him about what was to be done. Agamemnon was ruler over Mycenæ, and highly respected in all Hellas on account of his power and riches.

After the two brothers had talked over this grave affair, they announced to all the leaders in Hellas the great and detestable crime, and asked them for their assistance. All the king's chiefs of Hellas lent a willing ear to this demand, for in this breach of hospitality, committed against one of them, each felt himself personally aggrieved and bound to help in the punishment of what, in those times, was considered the most unpardonable of all crimes. Only one of the kings held back for awhile and needed much persuasion to join the league. This was Odysseus of Ithaca, who could well consider himself at the time the happiest of mortals, for he had lately married Penelope, one of the fairest and most

virtuous maidens of Greece. He had an infant son of great beauty and promise, and he owned much land and countless herds of cattle, sheep, and swine. Added to that, all the petty nobles of the island acknowledged him as their chief.

But a soothsayer, or seer, had greatly disturbed him by informing him that if he went to a great war he would be kept away from his home for the space of twenty years, and even then return to it in the guise of a beggar, after having suffered wrecks, captivity, endless wanderings, and loss of comrades.

No one could doubt that Odysseus was brave, but no one could blame him for wishing to be excused from taking part in the war against Troy. Menelaos and his brother, however, would accept no excuse from him, as he was the wisest and craftiest of all the leaders, and when Odysseus finally consented to join them he set about arming and directing the young Greek warriors with all his heart and soul.

There was another young prince whom it was absolutely necessary to secure, for a much venerated oracle had given it as a decree of the gods that Troy could never be taken without his help. This was Achilles, son of Peleus, king of the Myrmidons in Thessaly, and of the beautiful ocean nymph, Thetis. Notwithstanding his extreme youth, his father would not disappoint the whole country, and he let him go with those who came for him. But he sent along with him his adopted son, Patroklos, who was several years older, and to whom the boy was passionately attached, and also his oldest and most trusted servant, Phœnix. These two, the old man and the youth, he charged, as they hoped for the