

BOOK 7

Summary:

This chapter starts when Odysseus is first entering the city Phaeacia, and is greeted by Athena in the form of a young girl who leads Odysseus to the palace. Odysseus is immediately taken aback by the size and wealth of the palace, and then he quickly went to the queen Arete to beg for her and the king Alcinous mercy. They had mercy on Odysseus and after eating a lot of food and sharing his story Odysseus slept in the palace. Why did Odysseus turn his story from his being on Ogygia, instead of earlier (he could have started when he was with the rest of the boats or even before that)?

Quotation Analysis:

“I’m nothing like the immortal gods who rule the skies, either in build or breeding. I’m just a mortal man.” (186)

This quote is very significant to the characterization of Odysseus. Odysseus consistently denies that he has a great importance. This part especially demonstrates the humbleness of Odysseus. He was easily similar to the gods in build yet still claimed he was not, and he could have let the people go on thinking he was sent because it was the gods intention (this would not be entirely false, as Athena’s plan was for him to be there) and still stated that he was just a lost mortal. This might also portray Odysseus’ wisdom in not trying to gain more than people were willing to offer, Odysseus doesn’t even decide to tell them he is a king of another place.

BOOK 8

Summary:

Book 8 begins with Odysseus and Alcinous waking and heading to meet with the council of Phaeacia about Odysseus’ depart. Many had been gathered to look at the glorious Odysseus, so everyone went to the palace and ate and listened to music about the period of the Trojan war. Then before Odysseus can sail home they play games, and Odysseus once being insulted trumps all of their athletic skill with his discus throw. Then the Phaeacians dance to a song the bard plays about the love of Ares and Aphrodite. The Odysseus receives his parting gifts and bathes. Then the group has a feast at which the bard sings of the fight that won the Trojan war. Finally king Alcinous asks Odysseus who he is and where he’s from. How much about the blind bard is confirmed fact? (There is reference to the blind man’s suffering, maybe Homer added in that part, as his own piece of the story that he could relate to)

Quotation Analysis:

“No one, I tell you, no one who comes to my house will languish long here, heartsick for convoy home.” (192)

This quote illustrates a huge part of Greek culture. Without even knowing who Odysseus is, the Phaeacians treat him like royalty, because he is a guest. The fact the Phaeacians despised foreigners and still treated him this way, demonstrates how important hospitality is in Greek culture.