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English 4

Mrs. Parker

The Odyssey

The Odyssey, written by Homer, a Greek poet known for his great books which include this one that shows courage, resilience, and the essence of the human condition throughout the story. During the book Odysseus, the main character, tries to return home after the Trojan war but has a long tough Journey ahead. To start off with, Odysseus is caught at the island of Ogygia by a nymph named Calypso who wants to keep him captive. However his longing for home and family motivates his strong determination to return home. leading to a story full of adventure, temptation, and the human spirit.

All through the *Odyssey*, hospitality, or *xenia*, is shown as an important cultural value to most. On his journey back home, Odysseus meets lots of hosts and even some enemies along the way. Some showed a great deal of hospitality, some welcoming and others now not so much. The generosity of hosts like King Alcinous of Phaeacia contrasts sharply with some of the antagonists like Cyclops and Polyphemus. These encounters throughout the story show the significance of hospitality inside the ancient world and the outcomes of both being a good host and a bad one.

Furthermore, the *Odyssey* explores identity through the roles people play. For example Odysseus himself has multiple different identities throughout the book. To start off with he is an amazing strategist, he's also a prone wanderer and then lastly he's a committed husband. His way

of changing to special roles and facing demanding situations, shows the all-around good nature of his identity.

The *Odyssey* remains an amazing classic not only because of its great storyline but for its deep dive into various subject matters which include the craving for home, the identity of human spirit, the hospitality of people, and the complexities of human nature. Its lasting value lies in its portrayal of human experience—its triumph, suffering, and eternity. I would highly recommend this book to everyone wanting to study a high-quality classic.