

THE ODYSSEY, CHAPTER 8: ODYSSEUS MEETS THE PHAEACIANS AND STARTS TO TELL HIS STORY

Summary: After escaping Calypso, Odysseus washes ashore on Scheria, the island of the Phaeacians. The Phaeacians are nice people and famous for being great sailors. Their king, Alcinous, promises to take Odysseus home on one of their ships. A singer arrives for some entertainment and sings some songs, one about the Trojan War. The young Phaeacians want to play all sorts of sporting games with him. Odysseus isn't in the mood for games but finally agrees. Finally, the King of the Phaeacians demands to know the stranger's name and his story, so Odysseus agrees to tell them.

Vocabulary:

bard:
minstrel:
lyre:

1. How does the goddess Athena help Odysseus out at the start of this chapter?
2. **How does Odysseus respond when Demodocus sings “The Quarrel of Odysseus and Achilles”? What does this response suggest about Odysseus’ character, or at least about his state of mind at this moment? (See page 194.) (Important! ☺)**
3. Laodamas and Broadsea both challenge Odysseus to join in the Phaeacian games:
 - A. Do they take similar or different attitudes toward Odysseus? Describe the attitudes of each.
 - B. How does Odysseus respond to each? Why do you think Odysseus responds to each as he does?
4. When the bard starts up again (man, this guy can sing!), he tells a long story about Aphrodite, Ares and Haphaestus. Briefly summarize this story here. See pages 200-203. (It may seem insignificant, but it is more related to the text as a whole than it appears!)
5. How does Odysseus respond to the dance? (p. 203)
6. Look carefully at the conversation between Broadsea and Odysseus on page 204. Have they resolved their differences, or is there still tension between them? Use specific details to support their points.
7. What potential danger do the Phaeacians face from Poseidon?