

Thesis: In Book XVI of Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus tells his son, Telemachos, to trust in what he sees, not what he understands page 244

showing that trust and Odysseus reveals himself

family are more important than knowledge and understanding

would eat and drink, whenever the spirit was urgent with him; but now, since you went away in the ship to Pylos, they say he has not eaten in this way, nor drunk anything, nor looked to his farm, but always in lamentation and mourning sits grieving, and the flesh on his bones is wasting from him.

Then the thoughtful Telemachos said to him in answer: 'Though it hurts the more, we shall let him be, for all our sorrow. For if it were somehow given to mortals to have their choosing in all things, we should choose my father's day of homecoming. But you, when you have given your message, come back and do not go off to the estate to see him, but tell my mother to tell the servant who is housekeeper to go there swiftly and secretly, and she can give the news to the old man.'

He spoke, and started the swineherd, who in his hands took up his sandals and tied them on his feet to start for the city.

Nor was Athene unaware that Eumaios the swineherd had left the steading, but she came near, likened to a woman beautiful and tall, and skilled in glorious handiwork, and stood in the forecourt of the shelter, seen by Odysseus.

But Telemachos did not look her way nor did he perceive her; for the gods do not show themselves in this way to everyone; but Odysseus saw her and the dogs did; they were not barking, but covered away, whimpering, to the other side of the shelter. She nodded to him with her brows, and noble Odysseus saw her, and came from the house, outside the great wall of the courtyard, and stood in her presence. Then Athene spoke to him, saying:

'Son of Laertes and seed of Zeus, resourceful Odysseus, it is time now to tell your son the story; no longer hide it, so that, contriving death and doom for the suitors, you two may go to the glorious city. I myself shall not be long absent from you in my eagerness for the fighting.'

So spoke Athene, and with her golden wand she tapped him. First she made the mantle and the tunic that covered his chest turn bright and clean; she increased his strength and stature. His dark color came back to him again, his jaws firmed, and the beard that grew about his chin turned black. Athene went away once more, having done her work, but Odysseus went back into the shelter. His beloved son was astonished and turned his eyes in the other direction, fearing this must be

to Telemachos

180 a god, and spoke aloud to him and addressed him in winged words: 'Suddenly you have changed, my friend, from what you were formerly; your skin is no longer as it was, you have other clothing. Surely you are one of the gods who hold the high heaven. Be gracious, then: so we shall give you favored offerings and golden gifts that have been well wrought. Only be merciful. Then in turn long-suffering great Odysseus answered him: 'No, I am not a god. Why liken me to the immortals? But I am your father, for whose sake you are always grieving as you look for violence from others, and endure hardships.'

So he spoke, and kissed his son, and the tears running down his cheeks splashed on the ground. Until now, he was always unyielding.

But Telemachos, for he did not yet believe that this was his father, spoke to him once again in answer, saying: 'No, you are not Odysseus my father, but some divinity beguiles me, so that I must grieve the more, and be sorry. For no man who was mortal could ever have so contrived it by his own mind alone, not unless some immortal, descending on him in person, were lightly to make him a young or an old man. For even now you were an old man in unseemly clothing, but now you resemble one of the gods who hold wide heaven.'

Then resourceful Odysseus spoke in turn and answered him: Telemachos, it does not become you to wonder too much at your own father when he is here, nor doubt him. No other Odysseus than I will ever come back to you. But here I am, and I am as you see me, and after hardships and suffering much I have come, in the twentieth year, back to my own country. But here you see the work of Athene, the giver of plunder, who turns me into whatever she pleases, since she can do this; and now she will make me look like a beggar, but then the next time like a young man, and wearing splendid clothes on my body; and it is a light thing for the gods who hold wide heaven to glorify any mortal man, for else to degrade him.'

So he spoke, and sat down again, but now Telemachos folded his great father in his arms and lamented, shedding tears, and desire for mourning rose in both of them; and they cried shrill in a pulsing voice, even more than the outcry of birds, ospreys or vultures with hooked claws, whose children

"power" is back to the country belongs to him -> his own -> no one else

185 DO NOT DOUBT! KNOWS TO BELIEVE! WANTS TO KNOW! TRUST IN GODS KNOWLEDGE THROUGH UNYIELDING

190 WONDERS = NOT KNOWING TO BELIEVE

195 ODYSSEUS WILL BECOME A BEGGAR AND NOW A YOUNG MAN

200 GODS HAVE POWER -> OFFENSIVE STRATEGIES

205 FAMILIAR + CROSS EXAMINATION

210 GODS HAVE POWER -> OFFENSIVE STRATEGIES

215 THE RETURN

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