MOses Essay, Research Paper

While Greek myths and Biblical stories appear to be extremely different, the relationship between Athena and Telemachus

(Odyssey) and that between God and Moses (Exodus) are similar in that both Telemachus and Moses were of the chosen family,

were reluctant heroes, and were given specific instructions which required travel. Mainly, these two tales differ in that Athena and

God chose different ways to speak to Telemachus and Moses, respectively. Both Athena and God had a chosen family in which

they demeaned to be their most faithful followers, and therefore, they took the best care of such families. Athena chose Odysseus?

family. She favored Odysseus throughout his life by giving him several gifts. Odysseus was famed to be an excellent warrior and a

truly wise man. Both war and wisdom are Athena?s fortes. Odysseus favored Athena with sacrifices, gifts, and prayers. While

Odysseus was sailing and fighting the will of Poseidon, Athena continues to take care of his family. Penelope is said to be one of

the best weavers in all the land. Again, weaving is Athena?s forte. Finally, the beginning of the Odyssey focuses on Odysseus? son,

Telemachus. Thus, the goddess of war, wisdom, and weaving favors him. Athena speaks to Telemachus to give him courage and to

instruct him of her wishes. She favors Telemachus by making him handsome and strong. She even reassures him that ?the gods

have not marked out your house for such an unsung future? (p. 84). Thus, Athena?s favoritism is inherited. God chooses a family in

which his favoritism will passed down through the generations as well. Moses is a descendent from the house of Levi. His forefathers

consist of the much-revered Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is a Hebrew by blood, but he was raised as an Egyptian. While Moses

does not understand his birthright, and it is several years before he practices his birth religion, God still chooses Moses as his

prophet. As the story later continues, Moses? seed is also well blessed with land and good fortune. The most important aspect being

that God gave Moses, his children, and the other Hebrews land which is the most valued possession even in modern standards.

Similarly, Athena gave a kingdom in Ithaca to Odysseus? family. Ironically, both Telemachus and Moses feel that they are not worthy

of their respective god?s grace. In other words, their respective gods spend much time convincing the reluctant heroes to follow their

orders. When Athena first meets Telemachus, she praises Telemachus for being Odysseus? son. Telemachus downplays the

compliment and almost rejects the idea that he is the great hero?s son: ?Who, on his own, has ever really known who gave him life??

(p. 84). Athena reassures him that he is Odysseus? son and that she and the other gods choose his family. Telemachus refutes that

he cannot speak well, and people will not listen to him. Additionally, when Telemachus is speaking with Nestor, he offends Athena

with his ?I?m not worthy? attitude. To which Athena replies, ?It?s light work for a willing god to save a mortal even half the world away?

(p. 114-115). Continually, Athena must reassure the reluctant hero, Telemachus. God faces the same challenge in convincing

Moses that Moses is the chosen one. Following a similar pattern, Moses is amazed that he is the chosen one since he was not

raised a Hebrew. While gazing in to the burning bush, Moses asks, ?who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I have to bring

the sons of Israel out of Egypt?? (Exodus 3:11) God proceeds to convince Moses that He is with Moses. Moses then wonders why

the people will listen to him. Moses repetitively claims to be a poor speaker and has a doubting attitude. God begins to anger and

states ?Who appointed a mouth for man or who appoints the speechless or the deaf or the clear-sighted or the blind? Is it not I,

Jehovah?? (Exodus 4:11) Throughout, Exodus, God must remind and convince Moses that he is to lead the people and be the hero.

Athena and God come to their respective people in order to instruct them on travelling arrangements. Athena instructs Telemachus

to take a journey in order to find out what had happened to his father. Athena further gives Telemachus instructions on how to deal

with the suitors and various other household issues. God instructs Moses to take a journey into the land of Egypt to rescue the

Hebrews and bring them out of Egypt and slavery. God gives Moses several instructions on how to go about this including magic

tricks. Thus, both Athena and God send Telemachus and Moses, respectively, on a long journey. Finally, the two stories show their

differences in presentation, tone, polytheistic thinking versus monotheistic thinking, and even on how the gods instruct their

mediums. The style of presentation fits the people for whom it was written, the Greeks versus the Hebrews. Thus, the gods had to

follow their respective tradition in giving orders. Athena appears as several different people in order to tell Telemachus of her plans.

She appears as Mentor, Mentes, and several other characters as she sees fit. God uses a burning bush as his first contact with

Moses. Then, it is assumed that God or at least God?s voice is directly speaking to Moses. Unlike Athena, God never appears

before Moses in any kind of human form. In this manner, Athena appears to have a more personal relationship with Telemachus

because they are able to interact in a less threatening manner, ?human? to human. While God and Moses do have close

relationship, God remains well ?above? Moses. God does not literally walk with Moses; whereas, Athena literally walks with

Telemachus. Thus, the relationship between Athena and Telemachus is one of close interaction, but Athena is still perceived as a

Supreme Being. Athena and God chose their respective family, comfort their reluctant heroes, and send their chosen ones on a

mission that requires much travel. The relationship between God and Moses is one of supreme dominance, but God still shows love

and kindness with a personal touch towards Moses. Thus, the relationship between Athena and Telemachus and that between God

and Moses is similar in most every aspect from birthright to the making of a hero.

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