

Where does one dig up the idea for a myth? Some think that the ancient Greeks found fossils that inspired stories of the one-eyed giants, like Polyphemus. On February 5, 2003, *National Geographic News* reported the discovery of the tusk, several teeth, and some bones of a *Deinotherium giganteum* on the Greek island Crete. A distant cousin of the elephant, this mammal—the second-largest ever to walk the earth—stood fifteen feet tall at the shoulder, and had tusks that were over four feet long. The supposed eye socket was formed from an extremely large nasal opening in the center of the skull.

#### V. Comparison

- Portray the person favorably to someone else

#### VI. Exhortation or Prayer

- Call upon others to imitate this person's example



**READING ASSIGNMENT:**  
Books 20 and 21

## SESSION XVIII: DISCUSSION

Books 20 and 21

### A Question to Consider

If someone were stealing from you, how should you treat them?

Discuss or list short answers to the following questions:

#### Text Analysis

1. We have previously considered the importance of hospitality. How is this reinforced at the return of Odysseus?
2. The entire book is about Odysseus being “unkalypsoed” or revealed out of hiddenness. How is all of Ithaka “unkalypsoed?”
3. Odysseus and Telemachos make plans to deal with the suitors. Why do we not have any doubts about the propriety of this?
4. Why do Odysseus and Telemachos return to the house separately?
5. What is significant about Melanthios?
6. What is the point of Argos?
7. Odysseus is dressed like a beggar. Why do you think he actually begs from the suitors?
8. What does the boxing match with Iros tell us?

### Cultural Analysis

1. Why is it important that a culture practice the Golden Rule (i.e., “do as you would be done by”)?
2. Applying the Golden Rule is not always easy. How does it apply to our treatment of the alien and stranger in our midst?

### Biblical Analysis

1. What kind of justice does the Bible demand concerning thieves? (Ex. 22:1–5)
2. How is this justice “merciful” (especially when compared to Odysseus’s)?
3. Are there cases of stealing where the thief might pay with his life?
4. What would the Bible say about “jail time” for a thief?

### Application

1. When was the last time you showed kindness to a bum that might have been an angel (Heb. 13:2)?
2. When you were a guest at someone else’s house, did you conduct yourself like the suitors? Were your hosts thinking about stringing a bow?
3. What care should we take in “testing” others? Is that ever appropriate?

### SUMMA



Write an essay or discuss this question, integrating what you have learned from the material above.  
How should we treat thieves?

### Optional Activities

Take a bow and arrow and set up the kind of target that Odysseus shot through. Line up *two* small circles in a straight line, and try to get some idea how hard it was for Odysseus to shoot through the holes in twelve axe heads. Or draw an image of the suitors and find a local archery range or an area where it is safe to shoot arrows and aim high. It is time to bring a little justice—Ithaka style. Try to find an archery expert who will let you attempt to string a long bow. Also, if you want to add even more to the event, hold a weaving contest with the girls. The winners are crowned Penelope and Odysseus.



**READING ASSIGNMENT:**  
Books 22 and 23