

the name of the third, Keren-happuch. And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job, and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.

And after this Job lived 140 years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations. So Job died, being old and full of days.

## HOMER, THE *ILIAD*



The Greeks believed that a blind poet named Homer composed the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the best known works among the ancient Greeks. Most modern scholars, however, doubt whether the same person composed the two poems, and whether either can be attributed to a person called "Homer," who may not even have existed. Both works are thought to have been created over the generations out of stories handed down by word of mouth, although the degree to which either lacks the stamp of a single poet is disputed. The *Iliad* probably reached its present form in roughly the eighth century BC. It concerns events which, if they took place, occurred several hundred years earlier. When the poem opens, the Greeks have for years besieged the city of Troy. They have come to take back Helen, wife of the Greek Menelaus, king of Sparta. She had been brought to Troy by Paris, son of Troy's king, Priam. The Greeks are led by King Agamemnon of Mycenae, Menelaus's brother, but their greatest warrior is another Greek king, Achilles.

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1 Sing, O goddess, the anger of Achilles, son of Peleus, that brought countless ills upon the Achaeans.<sup>1</sup> Many a brave soul did it send hurrying down to Hades,<sup>2</sup> and many a hero did it yield a prey to dogs and vultures, for so were the counsels of Zeus fulfilled from the day on which the son of Atreus,<sup>3</sup> king of men, and great Achilles, first fell out with one another.

And which of the gods was it that set them on to quarrel? It was the son of Zeus and Leto,<sup>4</sup> for he was angry with the king and sent a pestilence upon the host to plague the people, because the son of Atreus<sup>5</sup> had dishonored Chryses his priest. Now Chryses had

come to the ships of the Achaeans to free his daughter, and had brought with him a great ransom; moreover he bore in his hand the scepter of Apollo wreathed with a suppliant's wreath, and he besought the Achaeans, but most of all the two sons of Atreus, who were their chiefs.

"Sons of Atreus," he cried, "and all other Achaeans, may the gods who dwell in Olympus grant you to sack the city of Priam, and to reach your homes in safety; but free my daughter, and accept a ransom for her, in reverence to Apollo, son of Zeus."

On this the rest of the Achaeans with one voice were for respecting the priest and taking the ransom

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1 I.e., the Greeks.

2 The god of the dead, often used to refer to the land of the dead.

3 Son of Atreus: i.e., Agamemnon. Menelaus was also a son of Atreus.

4 I.e., Apollo, god of prophecy.

5 I.e., Agamemnon.