*******The Odyssey* Book V Post Reading Assignment

Does Odysseus strike you as heroic when we see him for the first time in Book V? Explain.

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After listening to “Calypso” by Suzanne Vega, analyze the lyrics. Answer the questions below.

Speaker:

* From whose point of view is the song being sung?

Setting:

* When does your song take place?
* When (if applicable)?

Subject/Topic

* What is the song mainly about? Use specific lines from the song to support your response.

Mood:

* What is the mood of the song? How does it make you feel? Does it change?

Musically:

* Does the music match the mood? How Explain.

Conflict:

* What is the problem the speaker faces in “Calypso?”

Symbols/Metaphors:

* Are there any symbols or metaphors in “Calypso?”
* If so, what do they represent?

Theme:

* What do you think this song is saying about life?
* Is there something to be learned? If so, what?
* Evidence of theme – highlight words/phrases that support the theme and list them.

Now, compare “Calypso” by Suzanne Vega with Homer’s *The Odyssey*

1. How are Vega’s depiction of Calypso and Calypso of *The Odyssey* alike? Cite evidence from both the song and *The Odyssey* to support your response.

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1. What characteristics does Vega’s character Calypso have that contrast with the character of Calypso from *The Odyssey*? Cite evidence from both the song and *The Odyssey* to support your response.

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1. How do these similarities and differences affect our understanding of Calypso’s character?

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1. Why do you think Vega used the same pattern of events that was used in *The Odyssey*?

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**Lyrics**

My name is Calypso  
And I have lived alone  
I live on an island   
And I waken to the dawn  
A long time ago  
I watched him struggle with the sea  
I knew that he was drowning  
And I brought him into me  
Now today  
Come morning light  
He sails away  
After one last night  
I let him go.

My name is Calypso  
My garden overflows  
Thick and wild and hidden  
Is the sweetness there that grows  
My hair it blows long  
As I sing into the wind  
My name is Calypso  
And I have lived alone  
I live on an island  
I tell of nights  
Where I could taste the salt on his skin

Salt of the waves  
And of tears  
And though he, pulled away  
I kept him here for years  
I let him go.

My name is Calypso  
I have let him go  
In the dawn he sails away  
To be gone forever more  
And the waves will take him in again  
But he'll know their ways now  
I will stand upon the shore  
With a clean heart

And my song in the wind  
The sand will sting my feet  
And the sky will burn  
It's a lonely time ahead  
I do not ask him to return

I let him go  
I let him go.

Excerpts from *The Odyssey*

Calypso shivered, and she spoke her mind plainly:

“A hard-hearted lot you are, you gods, and as jealous as jealous can be! Why are you shocked if a goddess sleeps with a man and makes no secret of it, when she happens to find one she could love as a husband? It is always the same….

“So you gods are all shocked at me now, because there’s a mortal man with me. I saved the man when he was straddling across a ship’s keel, all by himself, after Zeus had sent another fiery thunderbolt at him and smashed the ship to pieces in the middle of the sea. All his crew were drowned, and the winds carried him here. I loved him and cherished him, and I did not think I would make him immortal like myself. But since it is impossible for any god to shirk or baffle the will of Zeus Almighty, let [Odysseus] go to the devil over the barren sea, if that is the command of his Mightiness” (64-65).

“I will work no secret mischief against you. No, I mean what I say; I will be as careful for you as I should be for myself in the same need. I know what is fair and right, my heart is not made of iron, and I am sorry for you” (66)

“If you knew what troubles you will have before you get to Ithaca, you would stay where you are and keep this house with me, and be immortal, however much you might want to see your wife whom you long for day in and day out. Is she prettier than me? I think not. I don’t think it likely that a mortal woman would set herself up as a model of beauty against a goddess!” (67)

“In four days he had finished the whole; and on the fifth Calypso saw him off, after she had bathed him and clothed him in garments scented with juniper. She did not forget a skin of red wine, and another large one full of water, with provisions in a bag, tasty stuff and plenty of it; and she sent with him a fair wind, friendly and soft” (68)