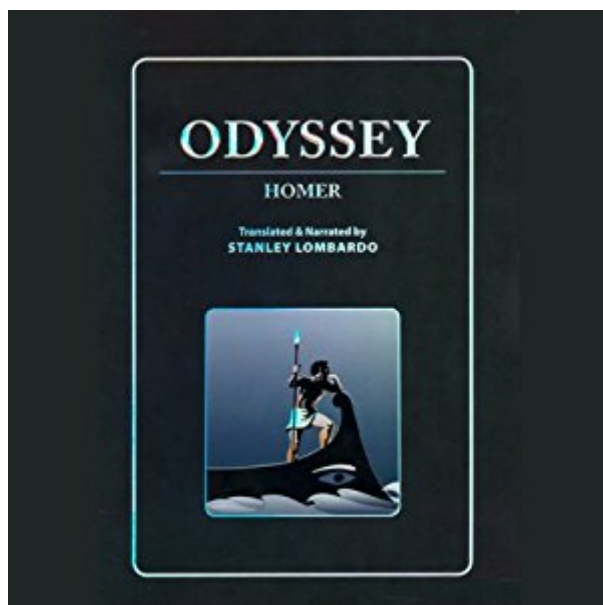


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# Odyssey



## Synopsis

Lombardo's *Odyssey* offers the distinctive speed, clarity, and boldness that so distinguished his 1997 *Iliad*. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 12 hours 21 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Parmenides Publishing

Audible.com Release Date: September 28, 2007

Language: English

ASIN: B000WOYDMA

Best Sellers Rank: #27 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > History > Ancient #27 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature > Poetry #113 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry > Ancient, Classical & Medieval > Ancient & Classical

## Customer Reviews

Before I begin, a disclaimer. This review is not written to help you decide whether to read the *Iliad*. It is to help you decide which translation of the *Iliad* to choose. In short: In 2015, this is the best translation to get. Get it in paper, not Kindle. Peter Green states in the introduction that he is following in the footsteps of Lattimore, to preserve as much of the poem in Greek--wording, sentence structure, meter, and so on--in English, but to also make it declaimable. It is a translation to be read aloud. Thus, it is also a challenge to Fagles's translation, among whose virtues is how well it works as an audiobook. To review, there are several major verse modern translations of the *Iliad*. Lattimore's is closest to the original Greek, and for undergraduate work can substitute for the original well enough. There is the Fagles translation, in modern free verse, is wonderful to read aloud. The Fagles *Odyssey* was on *Selected Shorts* once, and for a long time after I insisted that there was no other worthwhile contemporary translation of Homer. I swore by it. Lombardo's translation is pretty common in colleges because of the price and the slangy presentation. Then there is Fitzgerald, which some swear by, but Fitzgerald's translation is loose with the Greek and mannered and fey in its English. It even translates Odysseus as "Ulysses," a sure sign that fidelity to the Greek is not worth the translator's trouble. I am missing some others, I'm sure. So let us begin at the beginning. In the Greek, the *Iliad* has



poem in the back matter to help find your place, an enlightening glossary of names and concepts to help you through your first read, and footnotes to inform the reader of context that has since been lost. Word to the wise re: Kindles. These are long verse lines. To get complete lines on a Kindle screen, you need a Kindle that allows text to display in landscape mode. Even then, complete lines only work in a very small font size. Get this in hardback for now. The hardback is stitched and bound to keep, so it is worth your money.

This is not a book review, but a warning: there is a technical problem with this page. I received a different translation than the one shown here, and apparently the page changes randomly (since someone else says this is the page for buying a copy of the Iliad!). I've reported the problem and it is being looked into. Because you can't leave a review without a star rating, I've using one star for this warning. That's no reflection on the book described here, which I hope to purchase once corrects this problem. I know this is an unusual use of book reviews, but I think it's important for people to know that if they purchase from this page there is no telling what they might receive. I will delete this once the problem is solved,

This review is concerned with the translation of Homer's Iliad by Anthony Verity: it is about the intellectual product, not some essentially irrelevant technical issue regarding the vending of the work. Anthony Verity set out to faithfully translate the original text (as best we know it) of Homer's great poem. He clearly states that "It does not claim to be poetry: my aim has been to use a straightforward English register and to keep closely to the Greek, allowing Homer to speak for himself -- for example, in the use of repeated epithets and descriptions of recurrent scenes." Verity has carefully preserved the line numeration of the original, yielding a translation which matches the original line by line. The first-time reader of the Iliad might prefer a more classically poetic rendition, such as those by Lattimore, Fitzgerald, or Fagles, or perhaps a faster moving translation such as those by Lombardo, Reck, and, now, Mitchell. But with the Verity translation, the reader can be assured that he/she is getting something that hews quite closely to the original in structure and language, with style and word choices not artificially forced by some particular metrical scheme or in pursuit of rapidity as an end in itself. And the reader may be assured that the translation is by no means dull and plodding. Verity's choice to present his translation in what physically looks like poetic verse (in separate lines rather than a solid mass of prose) serves both to remind us of the Iliad's origin as a great poem as well as enhance its value as a classroom tool and reference, with lines of the original text readily located in Verity's rendition. And his retention of the characteristic epithets

as vital to the poem's meaning (rather than dismissing them as merely technical expedients used to achieve a set meter, as some translators are prone to do) does much to preserve an authentic Homeric flavor. This translation may not have been intentionally written as free verse, but de facto it functions as a free verse poem. This is not the finest English poetic rendition of Homer's great poem, but it may well be the best way for an English language reader to best approach the real heart of the Iliad.

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