Old Western Culture
A Christian Approach to the Great Books

THE GREEKS

THE EPICS

The Poems of Homer

1

Wesley Callihan
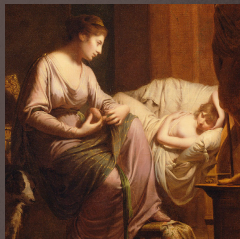
About Roman Roads Media

Roman Roads combines its technical expertise with the experience of established authorities in the field of classical education to create quality video resources tailored to the homeschooler. Just as the first century roads of the Roman Empire were the physical means by which the early church spread the gospel far and wide, so Roman Roads Media uses today's technology to bring timeless truth, goodness, and beauty into your home. By combining clear instruction with visual aids and examples, we help inspire in your children a lifelong love of learning. As homeschool graduates themselves, our producers know the value of excellent educational tools, and strive to ensure that Roman Roads' materials are of the highest caliber.

About Old Western Culture

Old Western Culture: A Christian Approach to the Great Books is an integrated humanities course designed to give students an overview of Western culture by studying the great books from a Christian perspective. The video series consists of four courses, designed to be completed over four years:

Year 1: The Greeks
Year 2: The Romans
Year 3: Christendom
Year 4: The Moderns

The Baptism of Clovis
François-Louis Dejuinne, AD 1837

Though most scholars point to the coronation of Charlemagne on Christmas Day, AD 800, as the beginning of Christendom, the conversion from paganism and subsequent baptism of Clovis more than three hundred years earlier on Christmas Day, AD 496, was a turning point of its own. Clovis was not only the first Christian king of Gaul (France), but he was also Trinitarian at a time when early Christianity in Gaul was dominated by Arianism, the heretical doctrine that denied the divinity and co-eternality of the Son. Clovis was also the first king of the Franks to unite all of the Frankish tribes under one ruler.

The Judgment of Paris
Peter Paul Rubens, c. AD 1638-1639, oil on panel, 199 × 281 cm.

The episode known as the Judgment of Paris has been a source of artistic inspiration through the centuries, with more than thirty different artists, including many from the Renaissance period, producing interpretations. Rubens himself painted three different versions, this being his final one. Though not recorded in *The Iliad*, the story of the Judgment of Paris set the stage for the Trojan War. Paris, a shepherd boy, was chosen to judge which of three goddesses—Athena, Aphrodite, or Hera—should be awarded a golden apple inscribed, "To the fairest." Aphrodite (center of the three female figures) promised Paris the most beautiful woman in the world if he would award her the Golden Apple of Discord. Paris took the bait, and Aphrodite helped him seduce Helen, wife of Menelaos. Helen became "the face that launched a thousand ships" as the Greeks waged war against Troy to get her back.

The Burning of Troy
Daniel van Heil, 17th Century AD, 92 x 61 cm.

Daniel van Heil was a Flemish Baroque painter who created multiple works on the theme of the fall of Troy. Notice Aeneas carrying his father from the burning city in the bottom left hand corner of this painting. This scene plays an important role in the great Roman epic *The Aeneid*, which we will study in year two of *Old Western Culture*.

The Mask of Agamemnon
c. 1550-1500 BC, gold

Heinrich Schliemann discovered *The Mask of Agamemnon* in 1876 at Mycenae. A German pioneer in the field of archeology, Schliemann's work was influential in the realization that many events in *The Iliad* are based on historical reality. He believed that he had discovered the body of Agamemnon, who led the Greek armies against Troy in the Trojan War, but modern archaeology suggests that the mask actually belonged to an earlier Mycenaean king. Nevertheless, the mask sparked a renewed interest in Homeric archeology.

The Anger of Achilles
Jacques-Louis David, AD 1638-1639, oil on canvas, 110 x 151 cm.

According to the Kimbell Art Museum, David's version of *The Anger of Achilles* "is drawn from Euripides' tragedy *Iphigenia in Aulis* and Racine's seventeenth-century dramatic version of the same story. Agamemnon, king of the Greeks, has just revealed to the youthful Achilleus that his daughter Iphigenia is not to be married to him but sacrificed in order to appease the goddess Diana and so allow the Greek fleet to set sail for Troy. As Iphigenia's mother, Clytemnestra, looks on tearfully, Achilleus angrily reaches for his sword. In David's treatment of the subject, Agamemnon's magnetic gaze and authoritative gesture appear to freeze Achilleus' outburst."

Farewell of Hector and Andromache
Anton Losenko, AD 1773, oil on canvas, 115.8 x 211.5 cm.

In what is perhaps the most emotionally charged scene of *The Iliad*, Hektor refuses his wife's supplication to remain within the city walls, insisting that duty calls him to fight. The painting is housed at the historic State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow, Russia. According to the gallery, "The painting is imbued with high civic ideals as was characteristic of the historical painting of Classicism."

The Deception of Zeus

Portrait of Andrea Doria as Neptune
Agnolo Bronzino, c. AD 1532-1533, oil on canvas, 115 x 53 cm.

In this portrait Andrea Doria, a famous naval war hero who served Charles V of Spain during the mid-sixteenth century, is depicted as Neptune, the Roman god of the sea. It was not uncommon for Renaissance painters to depict contemporary figures as characters from mythology.

Thetis Bringing Armor to Achilles
Benjamin West, AD 1804, oil on canvas, 68.5 x 51 cm.

Benjamin West was an early American artist who was almost exclusively self-educated. In this scene, Achilleus' mother, the sea nymph Thetis, brings her son new armor forged by the smith god Hephaistus. Achilleus had lost his original armor when he lent it to Patroklos, who lies dead on the bed.

Achilles Laments the Death of Patroclus
Gavin Hamilton, AD 1767, oil on canvas, 227.3 x 391.2 cm.

Gavin Hamilton, a Scottish neoclassical history painter, is known for his renditions of six famous scenes from *The Iliad*, of which this is considered the finest. This scene represents a major turning point in *The Iliad*, as Achilleus will now return to the fighting. His primary motive is no longer glory or honor, but the burning desire to kill Hektor and avenge the death of Patroklos.

The Funeral of Patroclus
Jacques-Louis David, AD 1778, oil on canvas, 94 x 218 cm.

Many of our modern notions about creativity and originality were not shared by some of the greatest artists in history. Jacques-Louis David, arguably one of the most influential painters of the eigteenth century, self consciously modeled his own work after the seventeenth century masters of the Italian Renaissance. The colors in this painting, according to commentators from the Louvre, "are a final tribute to Fragonard, whom David had followed in his youth—lemon and ocher yellows, dark purples, raspberry red, and blues as sharp as steel."

Priam Pleading with Achilles for the Body of Hector
Anton Losenko, AD 1775, oil on canvas, 63.5 x 99.1 cm.

Priam Pleading with Achilles for the Body of Hector, the fifth painting in Hamilton's series from _The Iliad_, was commissioned by Lord Mountjoy in 1775. According to critics from the Tate network of art museums, "The frieze-like composition is derived from Roman sarcophagus sculpture, and the heroic figures, with their emphatic gestures and expressions, from Poussin, whose paintings Hamilton admired."

Ulysses and the Sirens
John William Waterhouse, AD 1891, oil on canvas, 99 x 201 cm.

John William Waterhouse was an English painter of the Pre-Raphaelite tradition who was famous for his depictions of Greek mythology and Arthurian legend. In an attempt to be as close as possible to the original conception of the Siren episode from Book XII of *The Odyssey,* Waterhouse drew his inspiration for the sirens from an ancient Greek vase painting that depicted them as clawed birds with the faces of women—a radical shift from the more common depiction as mermaids or sea nymphs.

The Procession of the Trojan Horse in Troy
Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, c. AD 1773, oil on canvas, 39 x 67 cm.

Although the Trojan horse episode is without doubt the most famous story from the Trojan War cycle, it is not recorded in *The Iliad*. Tiepolo based this painting on the account recorded in Virgil's great Roman epic, *The Aeneid*.

*Ulysses at the Court of Alcinous*
Francesco Hayez, AD 1815, oil on canvas, 381 x 535 cm.

Francesco Hayez was a leading artist of nineteenth-century Italian Romanticism. In this scene from book VIII of *The Odyssey*, Odysseus weeps as he hears stories sung of the Trojan War. Notice the bard in the foreground; many believe that Demodokos, the bard of king Alkinoös, is Homer writing himself into the story.
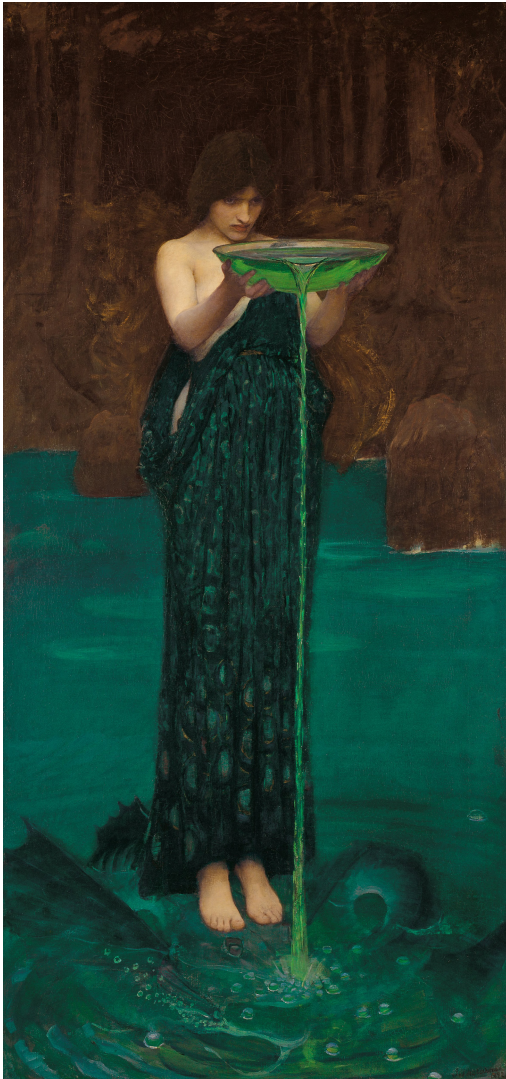
Circe Invidiosa
John William Waterhouse, AD 1892, oil on canvas, 180.7 x 87.4 cm.

Once again in this painting we see Waterhouse drawing from original texts. This scene is pulled from an account in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in which Circe poisons the pool in which Scylla bathes, turning her from a sea nymph into the monster we are more familiar with in *The Odyssey*.

Penelope Unraveling Her Web
Joseph Wright of Derby, AD 1783-1784, oil on canvas, 101.6 x 127 cm.

According to the Getty Art Museum, the potter Josiah Wedgwood commissioned this painting from Joseph Wright of Derby as a tribute to female loyalty and industry. In Homer's *Οδυσσεy*, Penelope, awaiting the return of her husband Odysseus from the Trojan War, was beset by suitors who claimed that Odysseus had been shipwrecked. She promised to marry one of them after she completed a shroud for her father-in-law. Steadfastly loyal to her absent husband, Penelope unraveled her weaving at the end of each day to avoid remarrying. Wright presented Penelope late at night, rewinding her thread into a ball. In the foreground, the backlit statue of Odysseus invokes his presence. Moonlight bathes the sleeping figure of their son Telemachus while Penelope looks on. The strong effect of light and dark contributes to the hushed atmosphere and increases the drama of Penelope's plight.

Lesson 12
The Legacy of Homer

The Course of Empire: Destruction
Thomas Cole, AD 1836, oil on canvas, 100.3 x 161.3 cm.

Thomas Cole was an early American painter who is credited with founding the Hudson River School art movement in America. This painting is the fourth in a five-part series representing the various stages in the life of an empire. This piece may draw inspiration from the Vandal sack of Rome in AD 455, an event that has inspired many paintings.

The Entry of Mehmed II into Constantinople
Jean-Joseph Benjamin-Constant, AD 1876, oil on canvas

Benjamin-Constant was a French painter and etcher best known for his Oriental subjects and portraits. In this painting, the Ottoman (Turkish) Sultan Mehmed II enters Constantinople (Istanbul) after the great city fell following a 43 day siege, formally marking the end of the Roman Empire. This monumental historical event had the unforeseen effect of reintroducing Homer and other Greek works to the West as eastern Christians brought Greek learning with them as they fled the collapsing Byzantine empire under the oppressive weight of Islam.

Comprehensive List of Artwork in
Old Western Culture

Delve deeper into art history exploring more of the paintings and sculptures used to illustrate the lectures in *Old Western Culture.* The list below reflects the sequence in which the images are presented in the lessons.

Lesson 1: Introduction to Old Western Culture
The Baptism of Clovis, François-Louis Dejuinne, nineteenth century AD
The Emperor Charlemagne, Albrecht Dürer, c. AD 1512
Rosa Celeste, Gustave Dore, AD 1892
Saint Augustine in His Study, Sandro Botticelli, AD 1480
Cicero Denounces Catiline, Cesare Maccari, AD 1889
Saint Thomas Aquinas, Carlo Crivelli, fifteenth century AD
Un Diner de Philosophes, Jean Huber, AD 1772
Dante (detail), Domenico di Michelino, AD 1465

Lesson 2: The Backdrop of *The Iliad*
The Burning of Troy, Daniel van Heil, seventeenth century AD
Zeus and Thetis, Anton Losenko, AD 1769
Jason and the Argonauts Disembark at Colchis, Charles de La Fosse, c. AD 1672
Jason Bringing Pelias the Golden Fleece, artist unknown, c. 330-240 BC
Wedding of Peleus and Thetis, Abraham Bloemaert, AD 1638
The Golden Apple of Discord, Jacob Jordaens, AD 1633
Paris, Anthony van Dyck, c. AD 1628
The Judgement of Paris, Peter Paul Rubens, c. AD 1638-1639
The Judgement of Paris, Joseph Hauber, c. AD 1819
The Judgement of Paris, Eduard Veith, c. AD 1925
The Rape of Helen, Giovanni Francesco Romanelli, c. AD 1626-1629
The Rape of Helen, Guido Reni, seventeenth century AD
Achilles Discovered by Ulysses, Jan de Bray, AD 1664
Sacrifice of Isaac, Rembrandt van Rijn, AD 1635
The Sacrifice of Iphigenia, Jan Steen, AD 1671

Lesson 3: The Anger of Achilleus
Apollo in His Chariot, Luca Giordano, c. AD 1683
Apollo and Artemis Attacking the Twelve Children of Niobe, Jacques-Louis David, AD 1772
The Anger of Achilles, Jacques-Louis David, AD 1819
The Wrath of Achilles, Peter Paul Rubens, seventeenth century AD
The Triumph of Achilles, detail of Achilles, Franz Matsch, AD 1892

Thetis Consoling Her Son Achilles, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, AD 1757
Zeus and Thetis, Anton Losenko, AD 1769
David and Goliath, Osmar Schindler, c. AD 1888
Helen on the Walls of Troy, Frederic Leighton, AD 1865
Helen of Troy, Evelyn de Morgan, AD 1898

Lesson 4: The First Critical Turning Point

Hector's Departure from Andromache, Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein,
    AD 1812
Farewell of Hector and Andromache, Anton Losenko, AD 1773
Andromache Mourning Over Body of Hector, Jacques-Louis David, AD 1783
Ambassadors Urging Achilles to Fight, Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, AD 1801

Lesson 5: The Deception of Zeus

Portrait of Andrea Doria as Neptune, Agnolo Bronzino, c. AD 1550-1555
Judgment of Paris, Luca Giordano, c. AD 1681-1683
Jupiter and Juno, Annibale Carracci, AD 1597
Jupiter and Juno on Mount Ida, James Barry, c. AD 1790-1799
Triumph of Neptune, Jan Eykensa, seventeenth century AD
The Birth of Venus, Nicolas Pousin, AD 1635
The Triumph of Bacchus Neptune and Amphitrite, Luca Giordano, seventeenth
    century AD

Lesson 6: The Second Critical Turning Point

Ajax Defends Patroklos's Corpse, Giulio Romano, c. AD 1538-1539
Greeks and Trojans Fighting for the Corpse of Patroklos, Antoine Wiertz, AD 1836
Achilles Laments the Death of Patroclus, Gavin Hamilton, AD 1767
Achilles and the Body of Patroklos, Nikolai Ge, AD 1855
Thetis Consoling Her Son Achilles, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, AD 1757
Venus at Vulcan's Forge, Frans Floris, c. AD 1560-1564
The Forge of Vulcan, Luca Giordano, c. AD 1660
Thetis Bringing the Armor to Achilles, Benjamin West, AD 1804
Thetis Accepting the Shield of Achilles from Vulcan, Sir James Thornhill, c. AD 1710

Lesson 7: The Death of Hektor

Achilles Laments the Death of Patroclus, Gavin Hamilton, AD 1767
Achilles Slays Hector, Peter Paul Rubens, c. AD 1630-1635
The Triumph of Achilles, Franz Matsch, AD 1892
The Funeral of Patroclus, Jacques-Louis David, AD 1778
Funeral Games in Honour of Patrocles, Antoine Charles Horace Vernet, c. AD 1790
Priam Pleading with Achilles for the Body of Hector, Gavin Hamilton, c. AD 1775

Lesson 8: The Telemachy

Wrath of Achilles, Michel Martin Drolling, AD 1810
Fury of Achilles, Charles-Antoine Coypel, AD 1737
Achilles Laments the Death of Patroclus, Gavin Hamilton, c. AD 1760-1763
Ulysses Returning to His Palace, Nicolas-Andre Monsiau, AD 1791
Departure of Ulysses from the Land of the Feaci, Claude Lorrain, AD 1646
Penelope, Domenico di Pace Beccafumi, c. AD 1514
Neptune Calming the Tempest, Peter Paul Rubens, AD 1635
Telemachus and Mentor, Pablo E. Fabisch, c. AD 1699
Nestor Shows Telemachus the Ship, Johann Heinrich Tischbein, eighteenth
  century AD
Telemachus Departing from Nestor, Henry Howard, nineteenth century AD
Helen Recognising Telemachus, Jean-Jacques Lagrenée, AD 1795
Building of the Trojan Horse, Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, c. AD 1760
The Procession of the Trojan Horse in Troy, Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, c. AD 1773
Sinon and the Trojans, from an illustrated manuscript of *The Aeneid*, fifth
  century AD
The Trojan Horse, Henri Paul Motte, AD 1874
Cassandra, Evelyn De Morgan, c. AD 1898
Ulysses and the Sirens, John William Waterhouse, AD 1891
L'Ulisse e Nausicaa, Michele Desubleo, seventeenth century AD

Lesson 9: The Court of Alkinoös

The Odyssey, detail of Polyphemous, Pellegrino Tibaldi, sixteenth century AD
Nausicaa, Frederic Leighton, c. AD 1879
Nausicaa and Her Companions Surprised by Odysseus, Joachim von Sandrart,
  AD 1639
Odysseus and Alcinous in the Gardens of Alcinous, Giovanni Battista Castello,
  sixteenth century AD
Psyche Opening the Door into Cupid's Garden, John William Waterhouse, AD 1904
The Garden of Eden, Jacopo Bassano, AD 1570-1573
Ulysses at the Court of Alcinous, Francesco Hayez, c. AD 1815

Lesson 10: Odysseus Tells of his Wanderings

Polyphemus, Giulio Romano, c. AD 1526-1528
Ulysses Pouring out Wine into the Giant's Bowl, unknown artist, c. AD 1886
Odysseus in the Cave of Polyphemus, Jacob Jordaens, c. AD 1635
The Cyclops Polyphemus, Annibale Carracci, AD 1605
Odysseus and Polyphemus, Arnold Böcklin, c. AD 1896
Polyphemus, Jean-Léon Gérôme, nineteenth century AD
Odysseus at the Laestrygonians, illustration in *Heroen: Griechische Heldensagen
  Für die Jugend Bearbeitet* by J. C. Andrä, artist unknown, AD 1902

Circe Invidiosa, John William Waterhouse, AD 1892

Ulysses Foiling the Wiles of Circe, Pier Francesco Cittadini, seventeenth century AD

Ulysses at the Palace of Circe, Wilhelm Schubert van Ehrenberg, AD 1667

Tiresias Appears to Ulysses During the Sacrificing, Henry Fuseli, c. AD 1780-1785

The Adventure with Scylla, Henry Justice Ford, AD 1926

Theft of the Cattle of Helios, Pellegrino Tibaldi, c. AD 1554-1556

Odysseus und die Sirenen, Gerard de Lairesse, seventeenth century AD

Ulysses and Sirens, Herbert James Draper, AD 1909

Lesson 11: The Homecoming of Odysseus

Odysseus' Arrival on Ithaca, Friedrich Preller the Elder, c. AD 1832-1834

Athena Appearing to Odysseus to Reveal the Island of Ithaca, Giuseppe Bottani, eighteenth century AD

Helen Recognising Telemachus, Jean-Jacques Lagrenée, AD 1795

Eumaeus Welcomes Telemachus, Friedrich Preller the Elder, c. AD 1832-1834

Odysseus and Penelope, Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein, AD 1802

The Work of Penelope, François Lemoyne, c. AD 1729–1737

Penelope Unraveling Her Web, Joseph Wright of Derby, AD 1783-1784

Dante and Virgil Traversing Cocytus, Gustave Dore, AD 1890

Ulysses Returning to His Palace, Nicolas-Andre Monsiau, AD 1791

The Slaughter of the Suitors, Christophe Thomas Degeorge, AD 1812

Odysseus and Penelope, Francesco Primaticcio, c. AD 1563

Lesson 12: The Legacy of Homer

Constantinople, William Miller, AD 1847

The Course of Empire: Destruction, Thomas Cole, AD 1836

The Last Senate of Julius Caesar, Raffaele Giannetti, eighteenth century AD

Barbarians before Rome, Evariste-Vital Luminais, seventeenth century AD

The Emperor Charlemagne, Albrecht Dürer, c. AD 1512

Mehmed II Entering Constantinople, Fausto Zonaro, nineteenth century AD

The Entry of Mehmed II into Constantinople, Jean-Joseph Benjamin-Constant, AD 1876

Thetis Dipping Achilles in the River Styx, Peter Paul Rubens, AD 1630-1635

A Reading of Homer
Sir Lawrence Alma Tadema, AD 1885, oil on canvas, 91.8 x 183.5 cm

Greco-Roman mythology and epics have always held a prominent place among the subject matter of artistic expression in Western culture. This course, *The Epics*, contains over 100 examples of such classical artwork related to the poems of Homer. Throughout the course you will have a chance to see and enjoy masterpieces from many of the greatest museums around the world.

Because the scope of the course does not allow time to discus the artwork during the lectures, we have created this supplemental guide to introduce some of the most important works displayed in the videos. This booklet highlights one to three key images from each lecture, and provides a comprehensive list of the artwork used in the course for students who want to explore more deeply how the themes of Western culture have been depicted by artists throughout history. Please review the Mature Content Advisory on page 4 of the Teacher Manual or the Student Workbook for help in proceeding thoughtfully with the themes and content of these images.

A ROMAN ROADS MEDIA *Video Course*