

(In the embassy, Odysseus lists to Achilles gifts Agamemnon has promised):

“seven tripods that the fire has not touched, and ten talents of gold and twenty gleaming cauldrons, and twelve strong horses, winners in the race, that have won prizes by their fleetness. Not without booty would that man be nor unpossessed of precious gold, who had wealth as great as the prizes Agamemnon’s horses have won by their speed. And he will give seven women skilled in noble handiwork, women of Lesbos, whom on the day when you yourself took well-built Lesbos he chose out for himself from the spoil, who then in beauty surpassed all the tribes of women. These will he give you, and among them will be she whom then he took away, the daughter of Briseus [Briseis]; and he will furthermore swear a great oath that he never went up into her bed nor slept with her, which is the custom, O king, of men and women. All these things will be yours immediately; and if hereafter the gods grant us to lay waste the great city of Priam, do you then enter in, when we Achaeans are dividing the spoil, and heap up your ship with gold and bronze, and yourself choose twenty Trojan women who are fairest after Argive Helen. And if we return to Achaean Argos, richest of lands, you will be his son, and he will honor you like Orestes, who is reared in all abundance, his son well-beloved. Three daughters has he in his well-built hall, Chrysothemis, and Laodice, and Iphianassa; of these you may lead as your own to the house of Peleus whichever one you will, without bride price; and he will in addition give a very rich dowry, such as no man ever yet gave with his daughter. And seven well-peopled cities will he give you, Cardamyle, Enope, and grassy Hire, and sacred Pherae, and Antheia with its deep meadows, and fair Aepeia, and vine-clad Pegasus. All are near the sea, on the uttermost borders of sandy Pylos, and in them dwell men rich in flocks and rich in cattle, men who will honor you with gifts as though you were a god, and beneath your scepter will bring your ordinances to prosperous fulfillment. All this will he bring to pass for you, if you but cease from your wrath. But if the son of Atreus is too utterly hated by you at heart, himself and his gifts, yet have pity at least on the rest of the Achaeans, who are being worn down throughout the army; these will honor you as though you were a god, for surely you will win great glory in their eyes. Now you might slay Hector, since he would come very near you in his destructive rage, for he says there is no man like him among the Danaans whom the ships brought here.”

In answer to him spoke swift-footed Achilles: “Zeus-born son of Laertes, Odysseus of many wiles, I must speak my words outright, exactly as I think, and as it will come to pass, so that you will not sit by me here on this side and on that and prate endlessly. For hateful in my eyes as the gates of Hades is that man who hides one thing in his mind and says another. So I will speak what seems to me to be best. Not me, I think, will Atreus’ son, Agamemnon, persuade, nor yet will the other Danaans, since it is clear there was to be no thanks for warring against the foe without respite. A like portion has he who stays back, and he who wars his best, and in one honor are held both the coward and the brave; death comes alike to the idle man and to him who works much. Nor has it brought me any profit that I suffered woes at heart, constantly staking my life in fight. Just as a bird brings to her unfledged chicks any morsel she may find, but with herself it goes ill, so was I used to watch through many a sleepless night, and bloody days I passed in battle, fighting with warriors for their women’s sake. Twelve cities of men have I laid waste with my ships and by land I claim eleven throughout the fertile land of Troy; from all these I took treasures many and noble, and all would I bring and give to Agamemnon, this son of Atreus; but he, staying behind beside his

swift ships, would take and apportion some small part, but keep the most. Some he gave as prizes to chief men and kings, and for them the gifts remain firm; but from me alone of the Achaeans he has taken and keeps my wife, the darling of my heart. Let him lie by her side and take his joy. But why must the Argives wage war against the Trojans? Why has he gathered and led here an army, this son of Atreus? Was it not for fair-haired Helen's sake? Do they then alone of mortal men love their wives, these sons of Atreus? Whoever is a true man, and sound of mind, loves his own and cherishes her, just as I too loved her with all my heart, though she was but the captive of my spear. But now, since he has taken from my hands my prize, and has deceived me, let him not tempt me who know him well; he will not persuade me. But, Odysseus, together with you and the other kings let him consider how to ward from the ships consuming fire. In fact he has accomplished very many things in my absence; he has even built a wall and dug a trench hard by, wide and great, and in it he has planted stakes; but not even so can he stay the might of man-slaying Hector. So long as I was warring among the Achaeans, Hector was not minded to rouse battle far from the wall, but would come only so far as the Scaean gates and the oak tree; there once he awaited me in single combat and barely escaped my attack. But now, since I am not minded to do battle with noble Hector, tomorrow I will make sacrifice to Zeus and all the gods, and heap well my ships, when I have launched them on the sea; then you will see, if you wish and have any interest, my ships at early dawn sailing over the teeming Hellespont, and on board men eager to ply the oar; and if the great Shaker of the Earth grants me fair voyaging, on the third day I will reach deep-soiled Phthia. I have many possessions that I left on my ill-starred way here, and yet more I will bring from here, gold and ruddy bronze, and fair-girdled women and gray iron—all that fell to me by lot; but my prize—he who gave it to me has taken it back in his arrogant pride, lord Agamemnon, son of Atreus. To him declare all, just as I charge you, openly, so that other Achaeans also may be angry, if by chance he hopes to deceive yet some other of the Danaans, since he is always clothed in shamelessness. Nor would he dare—shameless though he is—to look me in the face. Neither will I take counsel with him nor do any work, for utterly he has deceived me and wronged me. Never again will he deceive me with words; this is enough for him. But let him go to his ruin at his ease, since Zeus the counselor has utterly robbed him of his mind. Hateful in my eyes are his gifts, I count them at a hair's worth. Not even if he gave me ten times and twenty times all that now he has, and if yet other things should be added to it from somewhere, not even though it were all the wealth that goes to Orchomenus, or to Thebes of Egypt, where treasures in greatest store are laid up in men's houses—Thebes which is a city of one hundred gates from each of which sally out two hundred warriors with horses and chariots—no, not even if he gave gifts as many as sand and dust, not even so will Agamemnon any more persuade my heart until he has paid the full price of all the outrage that stings my heart. And the daughter of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, I will not wed, not even though she vied in beauty with golden Aphrodite and in handiwork were the peer of flashing-eyed Athene: not even so will I wed her; let him choose another of the Achaeans who suits him better and is more kingly than I. For if the gods preserve me and I reach home, Peleus indeed will then himself seek a wife for me. Many Achaean maidens there are throughout Hellas and Phthia, daughters of chief men who guard the cities; of these whichever I choose I shall make my dear wife. Very often was my gallant heart eager to take there a wedded wife, a fitting bride, and to have joy of the possessions that the old man Peleus had won. For in my eyes not of like worth with life is all the wealth that men say Ilios possessed, the well-peopled city, formerly, in time of peace, before the sons of the Achaeans came, nor all that the marble threshold of the Archer, Phoebus Apollo, encloses in rocky Pytho. For by pillage may cattle be had and noble sheep, and by winning, tripods and tawny horses; but that a man's spirit should come back when once it has passed the barrier of his teeth, neither pillage avails nor winning. For my mother the goddess, silver-footed Thetis,

tells me that twofold fates are bearing me toward the doom of death: if I remain here and fight about the city of the Trojans, then lost is my return home, but my renown will be imperishable; but if I return home to my dear native land, lost then is my glorious renown, yet will my life long endure, and the doom of death will not come soon on me. And I would counsel you others also to sail back home; since there is no longer hope that you will win the goal of steep Ilios; for mightily does Zeus, whose voice resounds afar, hold out his hand over it, and its people are filled with courage. But go and declare my message to the chief men of the Achaeans—since that is the privilege of elders—so that they may devise some other plan in their minds better than this, one that may save their ships, and the army of the Achaeans beside the hollow ships; since this one is not at hand for them which now they have devised, because of the fierceness of my anger. But let Phoenix remain here with us and sleep, so that he may follow with me on my ships to my dear native land on the morrow, if he wishes; but by force I will not take him.” (> Phoenix beseeches him, using the story of Meleager)

19.282-300 (Briseis' lament over Patroclus):

But then Briseïs, who was like golden Aphrodite, when she saw Patroclus mangled with the sharp sword, flung herself about him and shrieked aloud, and with her hands she tore her breast and tender neck and beautiful face. And in her wailing spoke the woman like the goddesses: “Patroclus, most dear to my heart, wretch that I am, alive I left you when I went from the hut, and now I find you dead, leader of armies, as I return to it: thus for me does evil ever follow on evil. My husband, to whom my father and queenly mother gave me, I saw mangled with the sharp sword before our city, and my three brothers whom my own mother bore, brothers beloved, all these met their day of doom. But you, when swift Achilles slew my husband and sacked the city of godlike Mynes, you would not even let me weep, but said that you would make me the wedded wife of Achilles, and that he would lead me in his ships to Phthia, and make me a marriage feast among the Myrmidons. So I wail for you in your death and know no ceasing, for you were ever kind.”