

Achilles and job as a comparative iliad characters

[Literature](#), [Poem](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Throughout human history, people have been infatuated with the role of the “hero”. The concept that someone would be willing to risk life and limb for someone else never ceases to amaze. Just take a trip to Washington, D. C. The monuments and memorials to Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Washington himself have levitated these individuals to demigod status in this country. This idea of the hero spreads to the realm of sports, with statues of great players and coaches outside the gates of stadiums, beckoning all to gaze upon their glory. The heroic concept is not a new one, rather it has been around since the beginning of recorded history. Obvious heroes such as Achilles, with unsurpassed rage and fighting ability, often overshadow “lesser” ones, such as submissive, steadfast Job. The idea behind the hero is one that dominates the way we view the world.

Achilles was a man wrapped in legendary fable. He was the child of a god, and immortal except in his heel. He is described as “strong, swift, and godlike” (Book I, line 129). His skill in battle was unmatched by anything except his fury. The first few lines in Homer’s Iliad are about Achilles’ famed temper and are as follows: “Rage: Sing; Goddess, Achilles’ rage, black and murderous, that cost the Greeks incalculable pain,” (Book I, lines 1-3). When he fought, he turned the tide of the battle in the Greeks favor. When he did not, the Trojans had the upper hand. Odysseus even goes so far as to say “It is doubtful that we can save the ships without your (Achilles’) strength” (Book IX, line 234). Achilles is a hero because of his abilities to win battles. He is famed for his infamous rage that has been the doom of many men. He cares very little for anything else except his own glory. And even to this day,

he is remembered as a legend and a hero. Achilles is remembered for what he accomplished.

On the complete other hand, Job is remembered more what he did not do. That is, disobey and dishonor God. He was “ blameless and upright and and feared God and shunned evil” (Job 1: 1). He was as holy a man as someone could possibly be. He was also surrounded by all the physical things a man could want: a big family, plentiful land, and thousands of slaves and work animals. Suddenly, God took everything away from him. When he heard the news, what did Job do? The Bible reads that “ got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. The he fell to the ground in worship, and said: ‘ Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gives and the Lord takes away; may the name of the Lord be praised’” (Job 1: 20-21). Job could have rebelled against God, but instead he submitted. In the next chapter, Job is confronted by his wife after he breaks out with painful sores all over his body. She tells her husband to curse God and then die. He calmly replies “ You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God and not trouble?” (Job 2: 10). Again, he is given the opportunity to fight back in anger against God, and again he refuses. Many people today would not view Job as a hero, but in reality it takes the biggest hero of all to be able to submit to things that no one understands.

Though both Job and Achilles are heroes, they are extremely different. Achilles was a man of action. He invoked fear on his enemies, as the Trojans were “ terrified, in fact, that Achilles, after a long absence, was back” (Book XVIII, line 264-265). He fought with passion and vigor, and struck down

soldiers in droves. He was also wild and reckless. Job was a much quieter man. He never killed anyone or won any battles. Yet, he did love his God with the same passion and fervor that Achilles possessed on the battlefield. He humbly sat and let the Lord do His will, and it is this attitude that has made Job a hero in the eyes of Christians today.

It is not normally what a person does that makes them a hero, it is how they do it. Men and women are drawn to people with passion about something, even if that thing is such a terrible thing as war. Achilles is a legend for his fighting prowess and his ability to unleash his anger to win wars. Job is remembered for letting God be God and for not taking matters into his own hands. There is certainly bravery involved in each of these circumstances, and it is that bravery, combined with passion and fervor, that immortalizes mere men. Though very different, both Job and Achilles are great examples of the timelessness of heroes.