

# Oedipus's strengths and weaknesses: cause of his tragedy essay example

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Homer in his books 9 to 12 of “ The Odyssey” (210-301) describes various characters differently. One of the main characters, King Oedipus is a person with strengths and weaknesses both as a subject and a leader. There is a mixture of intelligence and inner strength for King Oedipus. Besides, the king also has specific flaws. Amazingly, Oedipus as a king met his tragedy on the basis of his strengths and weaknesses. Throughout his life as a subject and as a king, Oedipus had strengths and weaknesses, which is significantly believed to have contributed to his tragic downfall within the community. Consequently, one question that continues to linger in the minds and discussions of many is, “ how did the strengths and weaknesses of King Oedipus led to his tragic downfall?”

Amongst the numerous strengths displayed by King Oedipus is the fact that he was full of self-assurance or confidence. Oedipus’ confidence/self-assurance led to his brevity and arrogance especially when after he had been crowned as the king. King Oedipus’ brevity enabled him to fight against the Sphinx without any fear (Homer 210-301). King Oedipus interrogates Creon whilst threatening to banish the Tiresias. It takes a confident and self-assured person to not only summon individuals but also pass specific judgments on various issues. Besides, another strength seen in King Oedipus is the swiftness with which various issues are tackled. For instance, King Oedipus sends Creon to the oracle at Delphi in order to obtain advice for the plague that makes the community worried (Homer 210-301). The fact that the King Oedipus was confident and self-assured made him to be carefree and this lead to his death. Therefore, there is no doubt that the tragedy of King Oedipus is directly related to the strengths he had that made him to be

careless.

Therefore, based on the above qualities and strengths, it is important to note that King Oedipus can be described as one who is practical, resourceful, proactive, and result oriented. In every situation, King Oedipus has been always ahead (proactive) and would always fight to have positive results (result oriented) (Homer 210-301). Notably, King Oedipus' practicality, nature, and being resourceful is seen during the fight of the Sphinx as well as keeping himself informed with respect to galloping advances of the declining numbers of the existing people and stores within the community. Indeed, these are some of his strengths. It is however regrettable that some of these strengths such as being over-confident, arrogant, and always in-front lead to his tragedy. The fact that King Oedipus was over-confident made the king to also lose focus in life hence paving way to the tragedy that befell him.

Despite being very strong, King Oedipus had also flaws and weaknesses that made him to be an ineffective king. King Oedipus was either over-confident or lacked determination, high tempered, and had excessive pride. For a long time King Oedipus lived without knowing the truth about his parents.

According to him, Polybus and Merope were his true parents and even when the oracle prophesized to him that he would kill the father and marry the mother, King Oedipus was over-confident and lacked determination hence did not seek to find the truth (Homer 210-301). Even though it is good to be confident, sometimes being too confident is sometimes very detrimental.

These are some of the weaknesses that led to the tragedy of King Oedipus. If King Oedipus had been determined to know the truth of his origin, then he would have discovered the real father and just like the Oracle prophesied the

killing of the father and he ran away, King Oedipus would have disappeared hence preventing the tragedy from happening.

The king's hot temper and the fact that he had excessive pride were a source of his weaknesses, which did not only make him an ineffective king but also led to his tragedy. King Oedipus' anger is seen when he lashes out at Teiresias and Creon in respect to bringing bad news to him. It is in this anger or high temper that led to him threatening the two people. Even though these tirades are seen as natural reactions, they sometimes cause a lot of distractions and disruptions that may lead to serious consequences. Indisputably, King Oedipus was a proud man and this made him even not to care about his past (Homer 210-301). King Oedipus tried to avoid his fate given his excessive pride, which led to his tragedy.

King Oedipus died as he tried to solve the mystery of saving his people. In addition, he was just trying to be a good ruler by ensuring that the interests of the people are adequately met. Whilst using his strengths and coupled with the flaws or weaknesses, King Oedipus met his tragedy. Amongst the strengths and weaknesses that led him to his death included being over-confident, excessive pride, and high temperament. There is no doubt therefore that even though King Oedipus was very strong and had some flaws, his tragedy was directly linked to the strengths and weaknesses.

## **Work Cited**

Homer. The Odyssey. Web. Mar. 3, 2013.