

Ethics and beowulf assignment

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Christianity throughout England at the time of Beowulf is associated with G. C. Characters look to praise God when good things happen. Proof. Avert Bloomberg 9 December 2012 The battle of good vs.. Evil has been one of the most recognizable themes of literature throughout time. However, these two very broad themes can be broken down into smaller categories demonstrated in the epic poem Beowulf; the themes of morality and ethics play a crucial role in the story, as well as the underlying theme of Christianity.

Beowulf is an epic that came out of a warrior culture and was used not solely to entertain but also to teach the moral thinking of this culture" (Checkering 86). Beowulf himself embodies all of the qualities of a typical epic hero, and there are clear examples throughout the text. He is easily the best warrior in the country, which he demonstrates by killing Grendel. " Wiglaf, who becomes Beowulf's successor, also embodies these traits. When all of the other soldiers abandon Beowulf in his fatal battle against the dragon, Wiglaf does not.

He displays courage and loyalty in helping Beowulf defeat the dragon, which is why he is named the next leader. It is true that Beowulf fights these monsters to help his tribe and the Danes, but he also does so for fame and glory and hopes to be remembered for such deeds, which is why, on his deathbed, he requests that a monument be erected to remember him and how great he was. In seeing this monument, future generations will remember Beowulf and the qualities he embodied, reminding them to fight evil forces with courage and strength and to always use the best judgment of morality' (Gar 90).

Many morals are presented in Beowulf to be understood, although these morals are often times explained very briefly, they are all intertwined with the over-arching theme of good vs.. Evil. An example of morality in the story is the idea that one's pride will be their downfall. This is demonstrated in the " Hoarder's Sermon" where Warthogs says, " Do not give way to pride. For a brief while your strength is in bloom but it fades quickly; and soon there will follow illness". (Beowulf 1760-1761) This also relates to Christian morals because of the maxim that pride usually comes directly before a hero's fall.

Warthogs also warns Beowulf not to " give way to pride" (Beowulf 1759), which has been demonstrated throughout the Bible many times by man challenging the power of God, (I. E. Adam and Eve). Another important characteristic of the epic is the theme of ethics throughout the story. The poem seemed to reveal the true values of the society in Beowulf culture. The first example of this came in the line " do not grieve. It is always better to avenge dear ones than to indulge the mourning" (Beowulf 61). This line seems to test the ethical reasoning in the time that Beowulf was written.

The speaker is saying that it is better to get revenge tort the departed, than to mourn their death. This is ethically twisted because in today's society, it is not considered morally correct to take an " eye for an eye". However, in the time of the poem this was the norm. This epic is also greatly influenced by Christianity. By the time Beowulf was published, the idea of Christianity had spread wildly throughout England. As such, certain Christian ideas and themes are easily recognized throughout the text. " The cost significant Christian value in this text is the connection between God and good" (Mitchell 337).

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Often times throughout the poem, when major battles are won, the characters immediately turn to God to thank him and ask for guidance. “ However, the idea of faith is at odds with the pagan concept of fate, which is often associated with unfavorable conditions and results in the text” (Parker 68). Throughout the text of Beowulf, the reader can conclude that a morally correct person in the story is one whom fights evil for good, as well as for the sake of others, to gain fame, and to strive to remain a loyal leader.

Increasingly over time, Beowulf was influenced by Christianity to include God’s help in order to remain moral and win battles of good vs.. Evil.