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s Iliad Iliad essays Fate and Destiny in The Iliad The Iliad portrays fate and destiny as supreme and ultimate forces. The Iliad presents the question of who or what is finally responsible for a man's destiny, yet the answers to this question are not quite clear. In many instances, it seems that man has no control over his fate and destiny, but at other points, it seems as if a man's fate lies in the consequences of his actions and decisions. Therefore, The Iliad reveals a man sometimes controls his destiny. In The Iliad the god's fate is controlled much in the same way as a mortal's, except for one major difference, the immortals cannot die and therefore do not have a destiny. Immortal's lives may not be judged because they have not and will not die. The gods are able to manipulate mortal's fate but not their own directly.

In Book I, the plague is a result of the upsetting of Apollo. The gods produce situations over trivial things, such as forgetting a sacrifice or, in this case, insulting Chryses. The gods have temper tantrums, and they switch sides quickly and without consideration. One day they protect the Achaeans, the nextt day the Trojans. The gods play favorites with no sense at all of any of the moral or political issues involved in the war. Zeus does what he can, but the others behave as though they were better than all the rest, in more ways than one.

They have no compassion for their own kind, and their concern for man is even less. Occasionally, the gods will show concern for one of their favorites when he is having a bad time, but it is very rare. This attitude is the result of their own vindictiveness against humanity and man's own tendency to irrational behavior or carelessness in worshipping the gods.

But more often than not, men find themselves fighting a force beyond their control. The opening statement of The Iliad contains the phrase "the will of Zeus," and this reflects the Greek's belief that man is in the grip of forces that he cannot control. It is also another way of saying that all things are fated and out of the hands of man. Book XXII shows that the gods control the fates of man: But once they reached the springs for the fourth time, then Father Zeus held out his sacred golden scales: in them he placed two fates of death that lays men low - one for Achilles, one for Hector breaker of horses - and gripping the beam mid-haft the Father raised it high and down went Hector's day of doom, dragging him down to the strong House of Death. (22 . 248-54) In the Iliad, the characters constantly refer to their own and others' final destiny and fate.

In Book I, Thetis, Achilles' mother, says, "Doomed to a short life, you have so little time. / And not only short, now, but filled with heartbreak too, / more than all other men alive - doomed twice over" (1 . 496-98). Fate has given Achilles a short life, but later, in accordance with the theory that men control their destiny and fate by their actions, Achilles chooses the short life with glory over a long life without glory. At this point, a man's choice becomes his fate. In Book XIX, Hera gives Achilles' horse Roan Beauty voice, and it says: Yes! We will save your life - this time too - master, mighty Achilles! But the day of death already hovers near, and we are not to blame but a great god is and the strong force of fate.

(19 . 483-86) This statement is in accordance with the theory that men are not in control of their destinies and, in this case, Achilles soon must die through no fault of theirs. Destiny wills it, just as it was Apollo who slew

Patroclus. They prophesize that a man and a god will put an end to Achilles' life. In Book XXI, Achilles' refers to his own fate: The