

# Achilles phoenix essay



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## Introduction

Iliad was written by Homer many years ago. However, this marvelous epic book is especially topical today and the relationships of one of the main character of the poem, Achilles and his teacher Phoenix, who supervised him and gave him a basic understanding of the ancient world, shall be particularly accentuated. Virtually the illustrious and brave Achilles didn't have a physical father; however it can be assumed that he was adopted by Phoenix, whose deeds indicated that he loved Achilles like the father lover the son. It was not an easy and hasty decision, but when the old wise Phoenix exclaimed " So you, Achilles- great godlike Achilles I made you my son, I tried, so someday you might fight disaster off my back. But now, Achilles beat down your mounting fury! It's wrong to have such an iron, ruthless heart", (Homer, Iliad) he thought that he had assumed responsibility for the guiding and upbringing of one of the most outstanding, fearless and remorseless heroes of the past. However, it must be noted that although Phoenix did his best to bring up and guide Achilles positively and to inspire him to act with nobility, good heart and merci to those he defeats, the illustrious and invincible Achilles deviated from his instructions and eventually paid his life for this, being shoot with the Paris arrow. And even the strongest armor - the Styx waters didn't protect his life. The deviation from the Phoenix's admonitions, in particular the neither advised ' doing the deed' led Achilles nor toy the pinnacles of the Olympus, but to the gates of Hades. My firm opinion is the Homer has drawn the line Phoenix - Achilles to deliver a very important message: it was down to demonstrate that the feelings of the son, although a ' foster' one', always dominate over the rest

of the feelings, sentiments and reflections and the violation of the father's advices always lead to lethal repercussions.

### Phoenix and his Exploits

Old and wise Phoenix underwent numerous challenges and tests in his uneasy life. After being wrongfully accused of committing adultery with his father's concubine Clytia, he was blinded by his remorseless father, who supplemented the castigation with the infertility of Phoenix. However, later it became evident that all these misfortunes, hardships and challenges were sent directly by the Gods in order to testify the mental and spiritual capabilities of Phoenix before he could train and guide young Achilles for his further exploits.

After the sight of Phoenix was restored by Chiron, another Achilles's comrade and tutor, Phoenix started to raise Achilles from his very childhood. his wise man, while nurturing Achilles tried to make the most perfect and flawless warrior of him and he almost succeeded. The ' foster father' of the Achilles managed to teach him the warfare, which Achilles in his turn mastered skillfully, promptly and effectively. Lately Achilles was reported by Homer to be the most skillful and professional fencer, lance thrower and ax wielder of the entire Greek Army. No one was capable of crossing swords or axes with him equally. Overall, his military master craft was exceeded by no one, except the poor Hector, whose only strategic omission was that Achilles was immortal. The Styx water completely protected his body and only his heel was assailable, because his mother was holding him by his heel when submerging him into the Styx waters. However, my firm opinion is that

Phoenix failed to bring him up spiritually well enough. Undoubtedly, Achilles was among the noblest warriors of the Greek Army, who treated his defeated enemies with due merci and clemency and his comrades with ‘ respect’ and ‘ equality’. Achilles was the first warrior in the Greek Armada not only in term of his military achievements, but also because of his spiritual force and profound, inspiring speeches before the lines of the Greek Troops. However, when Achilles failed to follow the guidelines of Phoenix and refused to cease the desecration over the body of the Trojan prince Hector, the Achilles failed to follow the admonitions of Phoenix and desecrated the body of Hector. This deed cost him his life in future and the prophecy of Phoenix came up to be true.

The biggest contribution to Trojan War was made not by the illustrious and brave Ajax, Odysseus and invincible Achilles. Naturally, Achilles was the one who inspired the troops and seized the valiant Trojans with heinous terror, especially after he slaughtered the “ defender of the Troy, the Son of Priamus and the brother of Paris, the noble Hector, who passed away being pierced with the lance of Achilles after a bloody, long and ruthless battle between two heroes”. But the fact that must be particularly highlighted in this essay is that the Achilles was reluctant to enter the battle, when Patroclus was slain by the hand of Hector and when the Agamemnon refused to follow the guidelines and advice procured by Achilles. Achilles retired to his camp tent and together with his myrmidonss was mourning his beloved friend and apprentice Patroclus, whose premature demise was a big grief and sorrow for Achilles personally and for the entire detachment of his highly effective in the military parlance myrmidons. Achilles was especially

outraged by the behaviors of the Greek Chief Agamemnon when the latter decided to return the battle prize, the young, beautiful and magnificently attractive daughter of Priamus Briseis to her father. Achilles fell in love with the girl and could not comprehend the return of the trophy, which he considered was rightfully due to him. Phoenix was among the fewest warriors to come and to console the comfortless and depressed hero.

### Phoenix and Achilles

As stated in the previous passage the war against Troy was won majorly due to the ability of Phoenix to convince Achilles to continue the fight against the Trojans. After Achilles was disappointed by the allocation of the trophies, the leader of the Myrmidons routinely refused to re-enter the battlefield.

Agamemnon acted with wisdom and discreet: he dispatched the embassy that consisted of the man whom Achilles respected greatly (Ulysses), the runner-up of military capabilities (Ajax) and his foster father and tutor Phoenix. After the weeks of hot discussions, deliberations and persuasions, irrespective the vigor and eloquence expressed by the Ulysses and sound and powerful exclamations by Ajax, Achilles still remained adamant. The two heroes returned to the war chief of the Greek Army and reported that their mission was entirely fruitless. However, Phoenix resolved to stay in the Achilles tent, in where he continued to persuade Achilles to return to the battlefield and to fulfill his destiny by delivering a fatal blow to the troops of the Troy. Evidently, neither the reminder about the heroic demise of Patroclus, nor the iniquitous distribution of the trophies conducted by Agamemnon inspired Achilles to return to the battlefield, but the love and

sense of gratitude to his tutor nor mentor, who finally contrived Achilles to take his sword and start slaying Trojans again.

### Summary

Homer managed to deliver a very important message to the target audience of the Iliad. Although the main thesis of the poem is the wrath of the Achilles and his ultimate tranquilization and mastering his own outrage and uncontrolled barbaric atrocities, the interrelations between Achilles and Phoenix plays an important role in the Homer's message. Homer affirmed that the fatherly relations between the formidable warrior and his tutor are of the most delicate and close nature. And Achilles, who was not persuaded by the military commanders of the Army, was easily convinced by the man, who was lately named his ' foster father'. Therefore, Homer extensively advocated the idea that the feelings of the son are in any case stronger the sense of wrath, retaliation and depression. And he managed to advocate it successfully.