

# Antigone foils creon

Profession, Philosophers



In the play *Antigone* we learn about a stubborn character named Creon who is the ruler of Thebes. This ruler goes on many power trips through out the play, which end up leading to his demise. Antigone, sister of the former king Polyneices sees Creon as a man with too much power who is making poor decisions and acting against the Gods. In a face-to-face confrontation, Antigone does not back down from the powerful leader, and tells him that what he is doing is wrong. Creon, who still has too much pride, banishes her into a cave where she would be left to die. Only later does Creon realize that what she was saying was correct. He tries to fix all the mistakes he has made but is too late. Antigone is the foil to Creon because she brings out fear and many character trait flaws in the King's personality.

Creon has a major lapse in judgment when he decides to bury Antigone in a cave to die. She tells him that she does not care because she was honoring her brother. “ Why the delay? There is nothing that you can say that I should wish to hear, as nothing I say can weigh with you....” (Sophocles 500-7) At first, it does not seem that Creon feels bad about doing this. Later he understands that he was wrong and regrets his decisions.

Antigone has a big affect on this change of heart from Creon because she truly believed she was in the right. By believing this she forces Creon to finally notice that he was wrong, and reverses his decisions.

Antigone's suicide affects Creon as a character immensely. It is her suicide that causes Haemon to stab himself. “ Who is dead, and by what hand? Haemon is dead, slain by his own father. His father? His own hand. His father's act it was that drove him to it.” (1171-77 Sophocles) This later also leads to Eurydice's suicide at the end of the play. Through Antigone's

actions, Creon is extremely affected. As a character, these events change the way Creon thinks about what he has done. “ There is no man can bear this guilt but I. It is true, I killed him. Lead me away, away. I live no longer” (1323-29 Sophocles)

Antigone convinces Creon that he is not a God, and that going against the Gods is a bad idea. “ Yes. That order did not come from God. Justice, that dwells with the Gods below, knows no such law....”(Sophocles 450-69)

Antigone fights with all she has, and finally brings Creon to the realization that what he has done was wrong. When Creon realizes that Polyneices body is unburied, and that he has not given a proper burial to the 5 chieftains, he recognizes that this will upset anger the Gods considerably. She helps him realize his fault by having a reckless attitude, this shows Creon that she will not go down without a fight. She makes one last plea to the Gods by attempting to put a curse on him. I believe this scares Creon later and is one of the main reasons why he tries to reverse the decisions he’s made in the end.

Creon gives the harsh penalty of not burying the dead Polyneices which is the ultimate punishment. Antigone’s plea to show Creon that what he has done is wrong is very evident at this point. “ So to my grave, My bridal-bower, my everlasting prison, I go those many of my kinsmen who dwell in the mansion...” (Sophocles 892-919) Antigone believes that the God, along with her brother would be proud of what she has done. At first, Creon is too stubborn to listen to what she is saying. He later realizes that many of the

things she said were right. Antigone's influence on Creon's mind ultimately cause a change of heart. Without her this would not have happened.

Without Antigone, Creon's fears and character flaws would not have been exposed. Creon's stubborn attitude and unwillingness to listen to others is his ultimate downfall. If he would have took Antigone's advice earlier, there is a chance he would not have lost everything that was important to him.