

# A theme of greed in the tragedy of macbeth

[Literature](#), [British Literature](#)



“ There is a sufficiency in the world for man’s need, but not for man’s greed.”

Greed is a bottomless pit which exhausts the person in an endless effort to satisfy the need without ever reaching satisfaction. But along with greed there breeds other, rather more indistinguishable, sentiments being the almighty feeling of ambition. These two entities that everyone feels are all one in the same; one can develop or turn into one another. It is quite simplistic once one ponders the thought of both things; the more one thinks about it, the more one can draw these two breathtaking sentiments’ similarities; however, once a person’s thought process becomes more complex, he can also reflect on his differences and that is what can be most confusing – something so close together but so far apart. In the play The Tragedy of Macbeth, there was a complete plethora of corruption, lies, and death, all a cultivation deriving from greed and ambition. Everyone wanted power and did not want to share it. Macbeth is the perfect candidate of these proclamations. While extremely ambitious to be king at the opening of the play, Macbeth is a loyal servant of King Duncan of Scotland. However, upon hearing a prophecy from the three witches that predict his rise to the throne, an insatiable sense of ambition to succeed and wield power overwhelms the good nature of Macbeth. To narrow down Macbeth’s ambition, he is simply becoming power hungry. The king is all powerful but completely having a corruption of power issue while not being checked by anyone. It seems that the only way to “ check” someone’s power at this time was by killing him or having him killed to take the high position of that society.

Although the line between ambition and greed can sometimes seem quite thin, mostly because both are goal-driven, there is a clear difference. Simply

put, ambition serves a purpose while greed is self-serving. In the text Calvin and Hobbes, Calvin tries to explain the complexity of what life is and the purpose everyone, or one could say, humanity serves. His analogy is that our world is a square and that is where all of humanity resides. He goes on to say that a crack in this square symbolizes death, and if a person was to touch it he would inevitably die. Furthermore, he continues to say that being that one finds himself inside the square and in the process of walking out if it, suddenly people realize their time is fleeting. From what Calvin is explaining is the very curiosity of what some men are talking about. Everyone actually has had some doubt of the importance of their existence and if their time here is just a waste. Calvin is basically speaking what some are afraid to say or dare talk about, and that is the daunting thought that everything could possibly be a waste, that we could have been doing something more constructive, more productive. With that being my observation of his words, Calvin furthers his conversation with Hobbes by saying "is our quick experience here pointless?" Not only does that question clarify my earlier hypothesis and not only does Calvin think being in this square is possibly a waste of time, but he thinks everything is "quick," quick being our lifespan. That correlates with the saying that "life is too short." Even though that quote can be used in a multitude of different ways, one could argue that the original holder of that statement would have understood where Calvin was coming from, in some degree.

Greed and ambition both refer to the desire to achieve or gain things. However, there is a major difference between greed and ambition. Greed is the intense and selfish desire to achieve money, power, or status. Ambition

is the desire and determination to achieve success. Greed is often viewed as a negative concept whereas ambition is viewed as a desired or positive quality. Actually, the literal view of what each appellation means is the manifestation of what these titles stand for. It goes without saying that when you read both individual texts, you get a different theme.

In conclusion, both greed and ambition are two beings that can become one another or diverge and simply be individuals. While they are being distinctive differences, there is a thin but vague similarity between the two, and that is they both want something or something to be done. It goes without saying what was said before about them in one of the same. Even if it is out of spite of someone, a person can develop his desire into something unfathomingly bad or something astronomically generous.