

# The epic of gilgamisg

[History](#)



Reflection on the Gilgamesh Story The most interesting feature of the Gilgamesh story was for me the contrast between the two main characters of the piece, Gilgamesh and Enkidu and the way that they take very different paths in life. They seem to represent two different types of masculine hero. Gilgamesh is born to be a king, and yet he seems the weaker of the two men at the beginning of the story. He is a man of the city, and he is surrounded by the influence of powerful women, including his mother who is a divine being. At the beginning of the story he is not a very likable character, and it looks like he might grow up to be a selfish man and an ineffective king. Enkidu, on the other hand, is more courageous, and he prefers the wild ways of the countryside, and the company of animals. It is Enkidu who is more willing to take on the challenge of battle and heroic deeds, which actually makes him appear to be the better choice for a great leader. Enkidu ends up being killed, however. In some way he is like a tragic hero who sacrifices himself for his friend.

I thought it was weak of Gilgamesh to become so depressed after Enkidu's death, because the whole point of being a great leader is that you have to learn to overcome sadness and hardships in life, so that you can concentrate on what is best for your people. The ending of the story shows Gilgamesh coming through that phase, and realizing what his responsibilities are. He is more realistic, and stronger, thanks to the difficult experience of wandering through the world without his friend and brother Enkidu. This kind of hero is less dramatic than Enkidu, but in the end it is the sober and sensible king who brings glory to his people, and so perhaps the message of the story is that it takes different kinds of hero to lead a great people. Bravery in battle is all very well, but the ability to rise up after life's hard knocks is also a very

<https://assignbuster.com/the-epic-of-gilgamisg/>

valuable quality.

#### Reference

Lawall, Sarah. The Norton Anthology of Western Literature Volume A:

Beginnings to AD 100. 2nd Edn. New York: W. W. Norton, 2001, pp. 10-42.