

# "king midas" and "daedalus and icarus" comparison essay

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King Midas and Daedalus and Icarus Comparison Essay  
King Midas and Daedalus and Icarus are two Greek myths. In King Midas the king receives a wish from Dionysus after doing him a favour. Midas chooses that everything he touches turns to gold. Daedalus and Icarus focuses on the main characters escape from King Minos captivity. Daedalus invents wings to escape, but his son does not follow his advice and flies too high. This causes the sun to melt the wax holding his wings together and Icarus plummets towards his death.

Both myths show some of the morals and philosophies of the Ancient Greeks. King Midas and Daedalus and Icarus convey Greek morals, such as hubris and the golden mean through their main characters.

Hubris in Ancient Greece meant over-confidence or extreme arrogance over ones ability. In King Midas, the main character, Midas, unknowingly makes a foolish decision, by wishing that everything he touches turns to gold. When his gift becomes a liability because his food is also turning into gold, he asks for the forgiveness and pity of the Gods.

Dionysus responds to this plea and tells him how to get rid of his golden touch. This shows that the Ancient Greeks only considered an act to be hubris, when the person in question was very arrogant and cocky about his ability. King Midas was foolish, but he realized that he had made a mistake. He asked for forgiveness and the Gods took pity on him. This shows that the Ancient Greeks valued humility and did not like overconfidence in the form of hubris.

On the other hand the Daedalus and Icarus myth demonstrates what happens when hubris takes over, through the character of Icarus. When Icarus gets used to his wings, he starts to fly higher and higher, towards the realm of the Gods. This results in his nemesis, in the form of death. There is a sharp contrast between the two myths concerning hubris. King Midas lived, whereas Icarus dies. The King Midas and Daedalus and Icarus myths convey through their characters, Midas and Icarus, how to deal with extraordinary skills. They stress the fact that hubris should not dictate. The King Midas and Daedalus and Icarus myths also both touch the subject of the golden mean. The Ancient Greeks considered balance essential. The golden mean in the King Midas myth is portrayed through the character of Midas.

He was already fairly wealthy, being a king, but he wanted more wealth and wished everything he touched turned to gold. Eventually King Midas realizes it is a curse to have too much of anything and asks forgiveness from the Gods. In contrast in the Daedalus and Icarus the golden mean is portrayed via Icarus. Instead of stopping in the middle and staying there he keeps going and only realizes his mistake too late. Due to the fact that he flew too high, the wax melted and he crashed to his death. This was after he was warned by his father, Daedalus not to fly too high or too low. The golden mean is an important theme in both myths and they both show how it is never good to fly too high or to want to own everything.

In conclusion, both myths use the moral lessons of hubris and the golden mean. In the King Midas myth the ending is more humorous whereas in the Daedalus and Icarus myth the ending is tragic. This shows how the Ancient Greeks believed that if you asked for forgiveness and realized your mistake,

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the Gods would take pity on you. If you, however, strayed from the golden mean or got into a hubris-like mind state, it could turn out ugly. Overall the King Midas and Daedalus and Icarus myths provide two examples of what the Greeks believed would happen to you if you did not follow their principles of staying with the golden mean and not being hubris.

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