

# The kite runner – sin and guilt



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“The Kite Runner” – Sin and Guilt In “The Kite Runner”, sin and guilt are so enduring that redemption is important to both the plot and the character development. One could say that the words sin, guilt and redemption completely sum up the story of “The Kite Runner”. In “The Kite Runner” we see how destructive and powerful guilt is and how efficiently it damages relationships and cripples the life of its vessel. We also see how the quest to alleviate said guilt is all consuming and how the road to redemption is often paved with pain and regrets. Amir’s story is riddled with guilt. He feels guilty for his betrayal of Hassan as he merely stood by and did nothing to help Hassan while he was being raped.

This guilt Amir feels is accentuated by Hassan’s righteousness, loyalty and his willingness to sacrifice anything for Amir, “for you, a thousand times over”. Amir promptly tries to bury and escape his guilt but finds he cannot. “It’s wrong what they say about the past, I’ve learned, about how you can bury it. Because the past claws its way out”.

Eventually his guilt drives him to insomnia. It seems that getting married helps Amir forget about his guilt for some time but when Rahim Khan phones him in the June of 2001 the guilt floods back along with the insomnia. Although Amir’s quest for redemption is noble the way he goes about it is flawed. He feels that he must suffer some kind of punishment in order to be free of his guilt. “I wished Hassan would give it back to me, break open the door and tell me off-it would have made things easier, better.” At first he tries to get Hassan to exert vengeance upon him by provoking Hassan to throw pomegranates at him. This plan of course fails as once

again Hassan shows his righteousness as instead of exacting revenge on Amir he takes the pomegranate and smashes it on his own head which only deepens the guilt Amir feels. Amir finally finds his redemptive punishment when Assef almost kills him.

Afterwards Amir feels "healed" but this is short lived. Amir soon finds that punishment will not redeem him. Amir's quest for redemption through punishment and paying for one's sins will never succeed as true redemption comes only through forgiveness. True forgiveness casts out all sin and replaces a desire for justice with a desire for love and relationship. Forgiveness therefore completely releases a person of all feelings of guilt as it deals with the sin that causes the guilt. This is especially evident in the forgiveness we receive from God. In the novel Amir is not the only one seeking redemption. Soraya and Rahim Khan also seek redemption for their sins, Soraya for the shame of her rebellion and losing her virginity and Rahim Khan for aiding Baba in lying to Amir and Hassan about Hassan's lineage.

Unlike Amir they deal with their guilt by confessing their transgressions and asking for forgiveness. Whereas Amir fails to find redemption for his sins, Soraya and Rahim Khan do. In the end Amir does find his long awaited redemption, not through atoning for his sins but by forgiving himself. Amir finally discovers the novel's key message, the message of freedom through forgiveness. The message Rahim Khan tried to get across to him before he died when he told him "forgive me if you wish but most importantly, forgive yourself". In the end we see how our sins cause us to feel guilt and guilt is a very powerful and relentless adversary.

If we do not deal with our guilt correctly we will end up being consumed by it, as we have seen in ??? The Kite Runner??™. (597 words)