Gilgamesh Essay, Research Paper

In the narrative gilgamesh the main character gilgamesh, the King of ancient urk, a man who is two thirds god, is forced to deal with a loss of his close freind Enkidu. Instead of trying to cope with the loss in a sane and sensible manner, gilgamesh literally goes the end of the earth to find secret of eternal life to give to its friend Enkidu. During this journey gilgamesh forced into a series of trial that tests is body and mind, while he is might be considered to be the trials of a hero, I personally view them as lessons in humanity which were what eventually brought gilgamesh back from his obsession with finding eternal and returning and sanity.

Gilgamesh’s problem was that he lived his life like a tyrant that and had forgotten that part of him was still human, but loss is a very human emotion, an emotion that gilgamesh was not prepared to deal with. It is because of his lack of humanity that he had to undergo the trials in order to get into its human side, because while a god can rule with absolute authority he cannot cope with even the smallest human emotional problems.

The trials that the gilgamesh went through can be separated into 3 phases , the first being his departure from the world had he knew , and in a way t the and mental state he was used to. It it was in this phase that he was forced into the journey and into its new mental state. The second phase was that of initiation, gilgamesh is shown what humanity truly is. The third and final phase was his return to his original state, but all he had experience has had a lasting effect on him.

The departure for gilgamesh was mostly buildup for the rest the story. The book has almost no introduction, it simply dives into the adventure, so of phase in gilgamesh’s trials shows the reader who gilgamesh is by allowing him to discover who he is for himself. This is done by forcing him to confront his fears, overcome them and get help from outside sources when necessary.

The effect of this technique that it not only forshadows what is to come, but also allows the reader get better idea gilgamesh’s state of mind. His desire to defeat Humbaba for example that he is a rather adventurous person, being part god, that makes sense. He wants to be a heroic king, so the people of Urk will love him and worship . defeating a great evil would be an excellent way show oneself as a great heroic king. We also see gilgamesh’s fear when he is afraid to cross into the forest. This is the first human emotion we see from gilgamesh, this scares him, it forces him to recognizes his own mortality. When Ninsun prays for gilgamesh and gives him the courage to go on he elevates himself back up to that god like state of mind, and allows himself to cross the first threshold, beyond the point of no return. Enkidu’s death mark the end of this phase in gilgamesh’s life, he knows that nothing will ever be the same as it was before, he is now experience raw human emotion and nothing will be able to counteract those feelings.

We have now seen gilgamesh depart from his view of what the world is and who he is, we know that he will have to undergo deep spiritual exploration before he will be able to resolve emotions brought on Enkidu’s death.

The next phase of gilgamesh is his “initiation” into humanity. During this phase gilgamesh undergoes the most changes and exhibits a wide range of emotions from deep depression to sheer joy. As king gilgamesh lived like a tyrant, getting what ever wanted, however he wanted, whenever he wanted. But that isn’t the way the real world works, so to be able to exist human society he must experience depression and learn what death is.

The first test gilgamesh must face its temptation, if you have studied mythology at all, you’ll know it in many civilizations gods were thought to be very prone to temptation, so by all rights gilgamesh should have immediately given into his temptations and not resist Ishtar. But gilgamesh not only resist her, he insults her.

When gilgamesh finally reaches Untapishtam he undergoes the emotional climax of his journey, the flood. Seeing so many people die at once showed him death on a scale far larger than he could have possibly imagined. This sea of debt in way, desensitised gilgamesh to death, he still feared death of and was shocked by it, but compared to the flood Enkidu’s death was almost irrelevant.Only after going through all of the that, does gilgamesh receive the ultimate gift, the secret to eternal life.

Throughout all the pain and suffering that the initiation forced gilgamesh to go through he came out on top, he emerged victorious. He learned with human loss to really was simply through experiencing it on a grand scale. In becoming human pain is important, Kings experience joy constantly, so if anything gilgamesh needed less joy in his life, and more pain.

Finally gilgamesh had to complete its final phase, and return from his journey as a human. During his return to Urk to gilgamesh was able to re-examined his life to and actions, in doing this he realized that he had not been living his life as a human, but rather living his own self center universe as a god. But when he returned to Urk he realized that traveling to the end of the earth, searching for immortality was not the work of man, he realized that he should concentrate on the needs its people, he should be king for his people not a God in his own realm.

If first gilgamesh is reluctant to return to the real world, to after all he had experienced the real world scared him, but when he received the gift immortality he was rejuvinated, all of a sudden he was once again full o off life and wished to continue his journey. When gilgamesh returned to Urk he entered the city in great change, in his mind felt that he failed, that his journey had been meaningless.. When he looked up and saw the great walls of Urk he realized the use a master of the human realm and the spiritual realm, he realized the building and maintaining U therk’s walls was the work of man, not searching for immortality, he then took comfort in knowing that his life has a human did in fact have meaning.

I feel that the overall message of this book is that the gods are far from perfect. They have the same flaws that we have, the only difference is the way in which they resolve them. Gilgamesh’s flaw was that he could not deal with loss, he went through all the classic stages, denial,guilt, anger, depression, that all the really needed his most difficult thing to obtain, the human experience.

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