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Heroism of Beowulf

**Introduction**

Bravery and heroism play a critical role in Beowulf and are demonstrated clearly by the protagonist of the story, Beowulf. Beowulf has also three significant moments in which he describes his bravery on killing the Grendel, killing the mother of Grendel, and on fighting with the dragon. He realizes that those who are not brave should be considered too shameful and seeks for proving his bravery in order to ensure that he must be recalled as a courageous hero. The heroism of Beowulf starts with humility but also with strong promises. He is also considered to be the hero of Anglo-Saxon and is brave, mighty, and can do everything for protecting the Heorot people. The motivation of Beowulf comes for his need for fame and glory. In his past, it has been believed that as long as the name of the person was spoken, her or his legacy stayed alive. This belief is also described in the starting lines when the author says, "So. The Spear-Danes in days gone by and the kings who ruled them had courage and greatness. We have heard of those princes' heroic campaigns" (Beowulf 1-3). It is considered to be a clear example of the significance of the legacy of an individual. Therefore, for receiving the fame and glory for his legacy, he realizes that he always might be mighty and courageous similar to the kings before him. With the help of heroic skills, he can make sure that he will always be recollected. He is efficient in being a brave warrior and is provided in the introduction: "There was no one else like him alive. In his day, he was the mightiest man on earth, highborn and powerful" (Beowulf 196-198). It has been clear that nobody can dare to test Beowulf, as he is greater than anybody on the earth. He will not be forgotten as he is considered to be the great warrior. Beowulf is considered to be someone whose heroism and bravery is across the bravery. He selects to have a burial tower which can be seen wide and far by ensuring that legend should never be forgotten. Beowulf makes an impact which is considered to be another mark of the hero of an Anglo-Saxon.

**Discussion**

The first courage feat of Beowulf is when he beats Grendel who is the monster that has been causing havoc for years on Heorot. Beowulf hears the king of Hrothgar, Heorot who is in the need of assistance due to the attack of Grendel and says that "I come to proffer my wholehearted help and counsel. I can show the wise Hrothgar a way to defeat his enemy and fine respite "(Beowulf, 277-280). He is willing for devoting himself fully on defeating the Grendel for bringing peace to the Heorot and also for the glory which comes with it. In order to display his courage to the Heorot people, he decides for facing Grendel unarmed. He also has the ability for ripping arm of Grendel out of his socket without any weapon. So, if he has chosen to war Grendel through weapons, his war would not have any worth. It has been believed that luck had chosen Beowulf for defeating the Grendel. Courage and fate are related closely in Beowulf as he claims that "Often, for undaunted courage, fate spares the man it has not already marked" (Beowulf, 572-573). It is considered to be the bold claim which believes that luck only comes to the favour of those people who have the courage for it. His heroism can also be seen when Unferth does a personal attack on the courage of Beowulf's and then Beowulf replied him by saying "The fact is, Unferth, if you were truly as keen and courageous as you claim to be Grendel would never have got away with such unchecked atrocity, attacks on your king, havoc in Heorot and horrors everywhere" (Beowulf, 590-594)

Hence Beowulf trusted that while nobody was able to prosper in defeating the Grendel, he has the ability to defeat the Grendel as his fate could give him the victory only because of his courage. After defeating the Grendel, the mother of Grendel decides to fight against the Beowulf in retaliation. Hrothgar visits to Beowulf for his assistance and then the Beowulf searches for the mother of Grendel for defeating her as well. Her swamp is considered to be a very dangerous place but Beowulf shows his courage and enters to the place where nobody dares to enter (Hill, 4). Even animals and other creatures are also afraid of entering his swamp. By wearing the armour, Beowulf starts swimming towards the mother of Grendel. He is capable of swimming for many hours underwater, that further describes that might of Beowulf. After reaching to her, he starts to attack. Her armour is so strong that his sword can break it down. It looks that he has no hope but still luck once again sees upon his courage, and he is capable of finding a stronger sword. He beats the mother of Grendel in the fight by chopping her head off and is appreciated for his heroism and bravery. After winning this battle, Hrothgar is capable of maintaining the peace for several years with the protection of Beowulf (Cherniss, 33). After these several years of peace, a thief steals the goblet of the dragon. In retaliation, the dragon creates havoc on the Geatland. He, now become an old man, sets out for defeating this dragon. When Beowulf sees this dragon, everyone who is with him gets afraid and run away from the sight. Wiglaf was considered to be the only person who shows his courage and support Beowulf who explains his courage by saying, "As God is my witness, I would rather my body were robed in the same burning blaze as my gold-giver's body than go back home bearing arms. That is unthinkable unless we have first slain the foe and defended the life of the prince of the Weather-Geats. I well know the things he has done for us deserve better. Should he alone be left exposed to fall in battle? We must bond together, shield and helmet, mail-shirt and sword" (Beowulf, 2650-2660). Wiglaf believes that it would be a better option to die with bravery than to survive with the feeling of being fleeing and afraid. This bravery would always be remembered, there would also be a shame for another companion in lacking fleeing and courage (Forni, 23). Wiglaf is faithful to Beowulf till his death. The sword of Beowulf breaks when he attempts to kill the dragon, and the dragon hits Beowulf with neck bite. Wiglaf is capable to assist the Beowulf in killing the dragon, but in spite of his assistance, Beowulf was killed from the wounds. He would always be recalled due to his heroism, bravery, and courage and he got the fame and glory which he always desired.

With the help of these three significant fate, Beowulf proved his bravery and he becomes a hero to the Geats. Similarly, there is also some other person who ran away in front of the dragon and lacked courage are only recalled for their shame of courage deficiency but the name of Beowulf can never be forgotten, and his fame and glory will live forever. The very well-known poem Beowulf highlights the God role as a protector who gives earthly well-being and wealth to the people of the sixth century Sweden and Denmark. Beowulf along with his people worship a god of pagan who serves for keeping the peace and humility. During that time Anglo-Saxons were considered to be the Pagan in which this well-known poem is set. Christians transcribed the Beowulf that signifies why themes of Christian are visible throughout the whole poem.

Whenever any great person completes deeds of heroism, the narrator describes his power to the favour of God and His divine plan. God is acknowledged and praised for every circumstance which is considered as a blessing. For some time, Hrothgar also appreciates God when he claims that "Holy God of His Grace has sent him to us West-Danes, as I hope, against the terror of Grendel" (Beowulf9). God gave the hero when the Danes were in excess requirement of a saviour. By accrediting heroic success to God, the Geats and the Danes exhibit the humility. The belief of the narrator can be exhibited in this principle on his statement that he did not give all the credit of victory to the Beowulf against the Grendel. He believed that if God did not want Beowulf to succeed, he simply could not have that success. The beliefs of religions of the Geats and Danes include the desire to be modest about the ability of an individual rather than to deny any intervention of the divine. Every aspect of life that is mentioned in the Beowulf is related to God (Cherniss, 44). At the start, it seems that God is Christian but one further inspection of references, practices, and rituals, it becomes obvious that Beowulf along with his companions worship a God of pagan. The tradition of Pagan has portrayed distinctly throughout the Beowulf. The principle of Pagan is considered to be the reason why Beowulf must assist the Danes. For the hero of Pagan, the death would be contributed and revered to the glory of the earth after the death which heroes of pagan strive for obtaining. Beowulf reference clothing of war which was made by Weland, who was considered to be the Norse god’s blacksmith. Moreover, when Grendel threatened the Danes, the people prayed to the gods of Pagan as this was their tradition of trust. The combination of such practices represents clearly the fact which Beowulf was a hero of pagan indeed.

The occasional Christian tradition echo in Beowulf can be attributed to the Anglo-Saxons culture of story-telling. He was composed in the tradition in the early eighteenth century when the narrators were considered to be pagan. As with all oral story-telling, it is like that the story had been transformed over time and values of Christian was incorporated so Beowulf can be translated into the context of Christian easily. Beowulf is remembered by his people due to his mildest, gentlest and kindest behaviour with his people and he was most desired for the dame. Beowulf is considered to be faithful to God throughout all of his modelled traditions of pagan for his kingdom's people. The message of Christian reflects the reality that this story was narrated by the Christians about the culture of pagan, that allowed for the poem translation into a context of Christian (Cherniss, 44). The poem final words address the reality that Beowulf seeks continuously glory because, at the core of Beowulf, he was a hero of pagan who gave willingly out of his treasure and was always devoted to the people yet fought and lived for the glory of earth after the death, not for the entrance into the heaven of Christian.

The hero is considered to be the one who is not only powerful but one who utilizes his strength for upholding others. The hero is humanitarian, selfless, magnanimous, philanthropic, and humble at best. In the unprecedented well-known Beowulf, the namesake of tale exemplifies each characteristic which is befitting a hero of Anglo-Saxon (Moorman, 20). He is courageous, loyal and honest. He portrays such characteristics in the war against Grendel, the affray with the mother of Grendel, and the fight against the dragon which inevitably terminated his life. Beowulf was considered to be the admirable exploits man. He had the power of more than thirty men in his arms and would utilize this power for aiding anyone in assistance. Upon Grendel plight hearing and the ill happening in the kingdom of Hrothgar, Beowulf gathered immediately his entourage for helping the king and defending the Heorot. When the Beowulf met the beast, which had terrorized for twelve years, he ripped single-handedly off the arm of Grendel, which is considered to be the act of killing the creature ultimately. To further describe the heroism, he kept the arm as a victory trophy. Upon learning of her death of a son, the mother of Grendel was infuriated. By killing of the most faithful advisor of the Hrothgar, she presented Beowulf with an invitation to the lair of underwater for avenging her son (Forni, 32). He is a distinguished brave man accepted the challenge whole-heartedly and made his route through swamp waters into the cave of underwater (Moorman, 34). Even the jaunt was very complex but the Beowulf was persistent in his approach. When he reached to the mother of Grendel, the battle was hard and long but the hero rejected for surrendering. He fought till the disconcerted Grendel's mother died and gave up. As a token of his luck, Beowulf took a sword studded with a jewel from the cave. In order to celebrate his heroic fate further, he executed Grendel and kept his head as a souvenir of his triumph.

**Conclusion**

The pride of Beowulf can be justified by the considering the belief of Anglo-Saxon that the heroism memory is only available to an adventurer by his death, but a humility loss looks to weaken him in defeating the mother of Grendel, he should steal a blade from her wall when his own sword went useless. The final battle in which Beowulf took part in was the most heroic one. Although the war terminated his life it proved his bravery in the story. He was considered to be the most significant hero of Anglo-Saxon. All of his troops were proved to be inconsistent. The left him in a period when he needs them the most. Therefore, his men lived a coward life that was apprehended by the Geats. It was Beowulf's power of mind and heart that provided him with the desire to fight the dragon when none of his men was there to assist him to expect one. His fight without weapon become successful but his pride of heroism becomes overwhelming at the death of Grendel. The fight of Beowulf with the dragon at the climax of epic be regarded as the heroism of Anglo-Saxon meeting the nemesis of Greek. The strongest link between the flawed heroism of Beowulf and that of a proud warrior of Greek comes after the death of wanderer Scandinavian. He is considered to be the hero for his people because he saves the Geat from the attackers as a result of which he is mourned widely. A woman cries at his grave as men sing the story of his strength and bravery but there is a doom feeling because they know that without their powerful king, they will be conquered and invaded.

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