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The Hero in Beowulf

The one major theme of this epic poem “Beowulf” is heroism. A true hero that goes to the end of his depths to fight for his own life just for the protection of others. A hero has many traits such as bravery, strength, and honor; Beowulf shows just that. Beowulf’s heroism adds up to his character with his powerful strength and brave traits. “This is my hope; and for his heroism I will recompense him with a rich treasure (Beowulf p.121) Beowulf the great might as well be the beast of the Anglo-Saxon time. He is the meaning of a true hero.

Heroism is featured throughout this poem from the very beginning. Beowulf is concerned for the town of Denmark being taken over by the evil monster. The monster is destroying these people’s lives and town. Beowulf is the only person willingly brave enough to come before the monster. His great pride and generosity shows that he is a fantastic hero. Beowulf knows just what he has to do get rid of the monster, he must kill him and he will with his strong capabilities. “Clear proof of this could be seen in the hand the hero displayed high up near the roof: the whole of Grendel’s shoulder and arm, his awesome grasp. (Beowulf p.130)” The Geats honored Beowulf for his great gratitude of coming from a far to kill the monster Grendel.

“They sang then and played to please the hero, words and music for their warrior prince” (Beowulf pg. 135). Beowulf was the champion of the victory for the slaying of the monster, Grendel. Hrothgar honored him with treasures just as he had promised. Wealhtheow, Hrothgar’s wife comes in as well granting Beowulf with a heroic deed. She hopes that whenever Hrothgar passes that Beowulf will act as a guidance and protection to her sons. Little did Beowulf know he was in for a rude awakening after his warm welcoming and gifts. Grendel’s mother raided Denmark stealing Beowulf’s prize possession he had won in battle. She was furious and wanted revenge for her son as she took his arm back to the swamps. Beowulf, the strong and powerful hero takes the battle one more time against the monster, but this time underwater. He takes his best sword and slays the monster to death. Succeeding in his victory against Grendel’s mother, Beowulf receives his treasure of gold. Beowulf was a brave man having to go through two battles not knowing if he would end up dead or alive. He is a prime example of a true hero.

“Now I am old, but as king of the people I shall pursue this fight for the glory of winning” (Beowulf pg. 168). Honoring the great hero for his new leadership as king. Beowulf the tough solider he once was many years ago, faces a new challenge for himself. A dragon has made his way scorching the earth and coming for Beowulf’s town. He knows he must put a stop to it as his only alternative he is the one that must kill the dragon. At last he takes his best sword to go and slay the dragon. With all his might fighting against the fiery breath and his tough scales of skin, the sword is just not enough this time. The dragon bites Beowulf and Wiglaf comes to the recuse stabbing the dragon in the stomach. Beowulf sticks the knife into the dragon’s flanks and Beowulf is slowly dying from the venom. The hero takes his last breathe telling Wiglaf he is now in charge. A true hero is gone as he won his victory of the treasure one last time.

Beowulf the brave and mighty hero fought his many of fights against the enemy. He won many of them, but the last one just was not enough for his age. He will forever be the hero as he took his own life for the people around him. He is the true meaning of all time hero.

Work Citied

“Beowulf” *The Norton Anthology of World Literature*, Martin Puchner, pp.104-287.