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Literary Analysis Midterm Paper

In both the “Epic of Gilgamesh” and “The tale of two brothers” , the words I would use to describe a common relationship between the characters is brotherly love. Each of the stories both portray negative and positive aspects of this type of love. There are negative actions that are done because of another person's actions. Certain situations should have never got that far that a person you love who is your blood or not is getting harmed emotionally or even physically. Lessons are learned throughout these stories that help these characters with a positive type of development. If you call someone a close friend or a brother, always consider what they have to say, jumping to conclusions and acting on only what you believe can cause more harm than good. That puts into question if the love was strong within both parties or even if the love was ever there to begin with.

Gilgamesh

The reason the brotherly love is questioned in the story is because of how strong a person's pride can be. The two characters in this situation are Gilgamesh and Enkidu. It is said that Enkidu is an alter ego of Gilgamesh. At first they were not fond of each other but then after some time they warmed up to each other and became important people in the other ones life. Gilgamesh has a tendency to not listen to another person's advice. He always wanted to be seen

as strong in people's eyes, but having that mind set is always necessarily a good thing. In the story the gods wanted to protect nature as much as possible so they put a monster named Humababa, it would only be a danger when provoked. Instead of Gilgamesh to just listen to what the gods have to say and accept the action they chose to pursue, he decided it was his job to kill the monster no matter what it takes.

Enkidu, being the wise one, knew that it was not a good idea for his friend to pursue this idea of his. He did try to speak to Gilgamesh by stating “what if the monster kills you” also he referenced the fact that the people also can be in danger. I believe Gilgamesh chose to not understand the reasoning of why Enkidu is trying to stop him from continuing with this plan. He had to have thought about the consequences of this action but he chose to ignore it and continue to pursue. Gilgamesh's response to Enkidu was “ Why dear friend, do you speak like a coward? What you just said is unworthy of you, it grieves my heart. We are not gods, we cannot ascend to heaven. No, we are mortal. Only the gods live forever, our days are few in number... why be afraid then, since sooner or later death must come. Where is the courage you have always had? Him saying these words shows how he just disregarded what Enkidu had to say and in the process making him look and feel like a coward. That shouldn't be occurring if there is supposedly love and respect between two people.

Gilgamesh still went against the gods and killed Humbaba. Instead of Enkidu standing on the words that he spoke he chose to still stick by his friend's side and help him with what he wanted to achieve. This action, in my opinion, shows how Enkidu was more of a brother to Gilgamesh than Gilgamesh was to him. He (Gilgamesh) didn't think of the consequences his actions would have. Yes, he apparently wasn't afraid of death but that doesn't mean the others he

pulled in to help him weren't afraid as well. At the end of it all they got the victory and went on to start cutting down trees and making items out of the wood. They even made a door for the gods they all have just disobeyed. Of course the gods didn't let this "sin" go unpunished, but they had to make sure the punishment cut Gilgamesh deep. The gods had to make sure that Gilgamesh would never disobey them again and every action has a consequence. They chose to take Enkidu away from him permanently. The one person Gilgamesh cared about to an extent over anyone else. When he was alive Gilgamesh didn't really show his love he had, when he passed away is when we know exactly how much Enkidu meant to him. He was divested. In the book it states "All through the long night, Gilgamesh wept for his dead friend. At the first glow of dawn, he cried out..." also in the book he himself states "Hear me elders, hear me, young men, my beloved friend is dead... I will mourn as long as I breathe, I will sob for him like a woman who has lost her only child." There are more examples in the book of Gilgamesh constantly describing the pain he is in over his friends' loss. This type of love should be shown at all times when the person is alive and also when they are no longer with you. You should pick and choose when you want to portray this love, because that will call into question if it's real brotherly love.

The Tale of Two Brothers

The love, specifically the Brotherly love, is tested between two literal brothers, because of another person coming between them with accusations. The younger says the older brother was like a father to him. Even family members struggle with love and it takes an obstacle to make that love stronger than it was prior. The two brothers that are in this situation are Anubis , who is the older brother and Bata, who is the younger brother. Bata loved his brother dearly and showed that by always making his brother clothes and taking care of his cattle. I would assume

that Anubis loved his brother as well because he raised him like his own son. I would like to think a blood relative would always want to hear their siblings' side of the story when they are being accused of a terrible action and not blindly believe what the other has to say.

To put into more context, Bata was working and ran into Anubis's wife getting her hair done. She was interested in how strong he was, so she told him to go and carry everything he desires from the store house. He came back with many things all at once. This made her even more interested in him in an inappropriate way. She was bold enough to state "Come, let us spend an hour lying down. It will be beneficial for you..." Bata, being smart, had the correct reaction. He became angry because what she is doing is wrong, he sees her as a mother and also that is his brother's wife. She was so scared that he would say something to Anubis that she had the idea to make it look like she was abused and she tells her husband that Bata abused her physically. When Anubis heard this instead of going to his brother and hearing what he had to say, he just blindly believed his wife. Yes, she is his wife and he should consider everything she has told him but Bata being his brother from the same mother, he should have also gone and considered what he has to say. Anubis's first action was to go and sharpen a spear so he can go kill brother. After reading this part in the story his makes question did Anubis ever love is brother. Anubis didn't just think about killing his brother, he actually carried out actions so the killing can actually occur. The fact that was his first thought is actually very saddening especially after the way you know Bata loves him.

Brotherly love should not have to be proven by a person having to physically harm themselves for you can believe them. In the story Bata is asking the same questions that I have he says "What is your coming after me to kill falsely, not hearing my mouth speak on the matter?"

And further I am still your younger brother and also you are with me in the manner of father...”

He didn't understand that someone who he calls a father and that is his brother would think and do such a thing. For Anubis to finally hear him out and believe him it took Bata having to ask the gods to put a body of water between him and his brother so there was no way He can get to him. But saying his peace wasn't enough. Bata cut off his private parts and threw them in the water. I choose to think that was him proving that he would do anything for his brother, but it should have never gotten that far, love like this is toxic and not healthy at all. “ And his older brother was very sorrowing in his heart, and he stood and wept loudly for him, and he was not able to be where his young brother was because of the crocodiles.” This whole situation is very sad. Bata told his brother you remember evil but why dont remember all the good I did for you. He made his brother work for him the same way he was doing Anubis. The consequence of Anubis's wife lies was him killing her and feeding her to the animals. I hope Anubis learned a lesson from the situation he in the end caused.

Conclusion

To say the least, both these stories showed that both people have to give a hundred percent for it to be considered Brotherly love. These characters were tested and each time they failed the test. One friend or brother loved the other more than the other loved them, and that's how someone was able to get hurt. It made a reader wonder if there was ever love between these people. Why did it take physical harm of one for the other to realize the love someone had for them. No one should have to prove themselves to another in that manner, if it takes a negative situation to occur, it's not love, it's a toxic relationship that needs to be worked on. The characters did learn their lesson at a great cost, but i hope they remember these outcomes in the future.

Works Cited

- Moldenke, Charles Edward. *The Tale of the Two Brothers: A Fairy Tale of Ancient Egypt*. Black Classic Press, 1988.
- Mitchell, Stephen. *Gilgamesh: A New English Version*. Atria Paperback, 2013.