

Beowulf Reading Questions 10

- 1.) He has ruled 50yrs when the dragon shows up. Beowulf was just like Hrothgar at the beginning of the poem – an old king that has to deal with a monster.

Both Beowulf and Hrothgar were 50yrs old when the dragon showed up. We had sympathy on Hrothgar for not fighting Grendel himself because he was old, so no one blamed him. There is a different perspective of bravery as he goes to fight the dragon, also being 50yrs old.

- 2.) King Heregar's son, Hereward, died. He was heir to the throne. Beowulf declined the offer to take the throne and said he would assist Hygelac, next in line. Hygelac dies with Heardred in the blades of battle, so Beowulf came to rule. The poet is showing us that Beowulf did not want to take a right that was someone else's. He was loyal.

Turning on your own people is the kin-killing sin of Cain, of Unferth, and of Heremod. Beowulf is so far from this that he refuses to take the throne until every rightful claim on it is dead. He is loyal to Hygelac. Beowulf stays away from the pride that leads to treachery all his life.

- 3.) "A good King that was." – In Line 866, it describes Hrothgar and that no one blamed him. This time was about Beowulf and his bravery.

*Hrothgar – when he comes back with the women in the morning after not fighting.
Shield's – after we learn about his ransacking and pillaging ways as he destroyed mead-halls.
Beowulf – suiting up to fight a dragon.
Beowulf is in contrast to earlier "good kings" – tang of hypocrisy. Beowulf was a truly good king.*

- 4.) In both, someone comes in to the dragon's leir and steals a cup making the dragon angry.

In Beowulf, the dragon is wakened after a long sleep when a thief comes in and steals a single cup. The dragon goes out in rage and terrorizes the kingdom. In The Hobbit, Bilbo sneaks in while the dragon sleeps and takes a cup. The dragon wakes, notices the cup missing, and this is what sets him off after being asleep so long.

Beowulf Reading Questions 11

- 1.) He chose 12 to go into battle with him. People also looked up to him to save them and for advice. They deserted him.

Beowulf was also fighting a serpent.

- 2.) In both stories, they are searching for the dragon, and they both have their shares of problems with him. In the Hobbit, Bilbo talks to the dragon and gains insight about what he is like. They have to escape him and end up getting trapped.

Smaug is destroying Laketown, similar to the dragon in Beowulf. Both Beowulf and the Lake men cannot penetrate the dragon. Beowulf also does not have the same insight on how to kill the dragon as Bard does.

Beowulf Reading Questions 12

- 1.) Valor is the ability to have great courage in the face of danger. Wiglaf showed valor in standing beside Beowulf until the end. Beowulf also was a man of great valor throughout his entire life never giving up. Treasure is the reward for having such valor.

Both valor and treasure are to be given away. A ring-giver acquires treasure through valor. Beowulf used his valor to win back treasures from the dragon.

- 2.) The dragon was the blood-avenger through most of the poem out of jealousy and anger. Beowulf becomes the blood-avenger by killing the dragon and taking the treasure back, and no one is left needing vengeance.

Beowulf doesn't need an avenger. No one else needed to die to pay for the death of Beowulf.

- 3.) They are exiled for being cowards.

Wiglaf had no sympathy for them. Beowulf trusted them and gave them their honor, but it was an effort just thrown away. They will be outcasts and their families will be exiled. No mead-halls will ever take them in again.

- 4.) Thorin is keeping treasure, he is not the same anymore and has become overwhelmed by the treasure. Instead of using it for good he is using it for himself to glorify and honor him.

Thorin is becoming what Hrothgar warned Beowulf about. The temptation of a king to turn into a dragon is very common and that is what Thorin is turning into.

