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## Reading Questions 10-12

### Reading 10 (10/3/23)

Question 1- Beowulf was king for 50 years when the dragon appeared. The Hrothgar ruled for 50 years before the big monster problem happened. Hrothgar was in rein for 50 years before he died, and Beowulf was in rein for 50 years before he died as well.

Answer- *“Beowulf has been king for 50 years when the dragon shows up, which is the exact amount of time the Hrothgar had been king when Grendel first showed up. The poet clearly wants us to see this, and it sheds some light on Hrothgar. We were sympathetic with him for not fighting Grendel himself- after all, he’s old. But we see a different reaction from Beowulf when he’s in a similar situation...”*

Question 2- The poet is showing us that Beowulf has been loyal and noble all throughout his life, no matter what problem has showed us or what decision he has had to make.

Answer- *“We know that turning on your own people is the kin-killing sin of Cain, of Unferth, and of Heremod. Beowulf is so far away from this sin that even when he’s offered the throne, he refuses to take it until everyone with a rightful claim on it is dead. He is loyal to Hygelac not just during his life- he is loyal to his family after his death. Hrothgar had warned Beowulf against the pride that leads to treachery, and we see here that Beowulf stays away from that all his life.”*

Question 3- The previous times we have heard “A good king that was”, that king was not that good of a king. We have learned something about the king that makes him not a good king. Beowulf, on the other hand, was a good king. He was loyal, noble, and not prideful. Beowulf was actually the good king.

Answer- *“Both of the previous times we’ve heard this, there has been a possible irony in the statement... In Hrothgar’s case we heard this phrase immediately after we see him coming back with the woman in the morning after not fighting Grendel. In Shield’s case we are told he was a good king immediately after we learn about his ransacking and pillaging way as he destroyed mead-halls. In Beowulf’s case we are told this immediately after we learn that he shows deference and loyalty and is faithful to all the vows he made to his ring-giver in the mead-hall...Beowulf we seem to have been given a picture of a truly “good king.”*

Question 4- In both the Hobbit and in Beowulf there is a greedy dragon. The dragon, in both stories, was on top of a bunch of treasure (gold coins, gems, etc.). We also see both dragons have a bad attitude when they get disturbed. The dragon in the Hobbit looked for the dwarfs and Bilbo and tried to kill them and burn their things. The dragon in Beowulf burned the whole city down and left nothing. Both dragons were upset about a golden cup that has been stolen from their cave.

Answer- *“...The dragon in Beowulf is wakened after a long sleep when a thief comes in and steals a single cup. When the dragon wakes, he misses the cup, and in his rage, he goes out and terrorizes the kingdom. Tolkien borrowed those details straight across. Bilbo is the designated burglar for the expedition, and so he sneaks in while the dragon sleeps and takes a single cup. The dragon wake and notices the absence and this is what sets him off after being asleep for so long that some of the Lake men had stopped believing in the dragon at all.”*

## Reading 11 (10/4/2023)

Question 1- Beowulf fights the dragon for his people and kingdom. While he fights the dragon, everyone leaves him except one other person. Beowulf dies trying to fight the dragon.

Answer- *"There are some interesting parallels between Christ and Beowulf in this section. One obvious one is that Beowulf is fighting a serpent. He goes alone on behalf of his people. He has a band of twelve. They desert him and run. We'll see more parallels in the next section as well."*

Question 2- In this section we see that Beowulf is now fighting the dragon. In the Hobbit, we see that the people of Lake-town were fighting the dragon. The people of Lake-town won the battle and killed the dragon.

Answer- *"Smaug is destroying Lake-town, and this is much like the devastation of the dragon in Beowulf. We also see Beowulf's sword being unable to pierce the dragon and the arrows from the Lake men simply bouncing off. Of course, in Tolkien, Bard has been given the secret information about the one vulnerable spot on Smaug's belly-Beowulf doesn't have that advantage."*

## Reading 12 (10/5/2023)

Question 1- Valor and the treasure go hand in hand really well. Beowulf had a lot of courage facing the dragon, with just one other people. First of all, you have to have a lot of courage to fight a dragon, but especially an angry dragon. If you want something bad enough, you are going to have to fight for it, like Beowulf did with the dragon guarding the treasure.

Answer- *"As we've seen throughout the book, treasure is meant to be used to secure valor...A good king would have been a loyal thane once, and he would have given his valor and received treasure from his own ring-giver. After he is a king, he would acquire more treasure through conquering other kingdoms (valor). Or, in Beowulf's case, he would use his valor to win back ancient treasures from the clutches of monsters. Either way, both valor and gold are meant to be given away, and when they are, both bring in a rich harvest. In other words, the Saxons traded iron for gold and gold for iron."*

Question 2- The people that were supposed to fight the dragon with Beowulf left him (all but one) and Beowulf ended up dying. The others were not doing their job and it ended up costing Beowulf's life. They could have possibly saved Beowulf's life if they fought, the dragon would have more of a competition.

Answer- *"We'll see this more specifically mentioned in the next section, but Beowulf have managed to avenge himself. He doesn't need an avenger. Throughout the poem we've seen the endless need for vengeance, and how it's never satisfied until everyone is dead. Here, Beowulf gives a last gift to his people by killing his own killer. No one else need to die to pay for the death of Beowulf."*

Question 3- I think that the people would feel regret from not helping the fighting the dragon with Beowulf, they have to live with themselves know that cowered out and did not do their job. The people who betrayed Beowulf will have a horrible rest of their life. They will be thought of no one and will always be looked down to.

Answer- *"Wiglaf obviously has no sympathy for these men. He points out to them that they were hand chosen by Beowulf because he thought they were his most loyal men. He had given their armor and their*

*weapons to them, and it was effort he had just thrown away. He tells them they will be outcast, they and their families will be exiled, their lands will be seized, and no mead-hall will ever take them in again."*

Question 4- The dragon in Beowulf and in the Hobbit is now dead. That means there is nothing guarding the treasure anymore. In Beowulf the treasure is now kingdoms' treasure. The treasure Smaug was guarding is now in the dwarves' and Bilbo's hands.

Answer- *"In this section, Thorin is becoming what Hrothgar warned Beowulf about. Remember how the example of Heremod keeps coming up in Beowulf. The temptation of a king to turn into a dragon is a common one, and one that Thorin is falling into. Rather than using treasure to cement loyalty, he is hoarding treasure in a way that creates enemies."*