Antigone Essay, Research Paper

In the story Antigone Creon showed that to much power will corrupt anyone. As Creon became blessed with total control his character, principals, and his judgement deteriorated. Antigone was written by a man named Sophocles. He was a man that did an excellent job of showing how absolute power will corrupt absolutely. Using Creon’s utmost authority, Sophocles told of how everything he once stood for had crumbled.

The play Antigone begins by telling of a troubled royal family. In this play there are nine main characters. I will focus on only a few of these characters. The play starts with Antigone (niece of Creon) and her sister Ismene talking about how their father Oedipus died, and how his death brought very hard times. Their brothers Eteocles and Polynices have just died fight each other. Eteocles was fighting for the city, while Polynices was fighting against the city and was the supposed ‘traitor’. When the two died Eteocles was given full burial rites, but Polynices was given absolutely no burial rites of any kind because he was a traitor. His death was forbidden to be mourned throughout the city. The death of Eteocles and Polynices spurred Creon’s rite to the throne. He insisted that the body of Polynices lay to rot for all the city to see. Antigone, being his sister, couldn’t stand to see this happen. She went and did her best to cover her brothers body. She got caught while doing this. She then was brought before her uncle the king. She denied nothing, and was pround to admit to the crime. Her stubborn uncle insisted that she pay the price for her crime. He took her to a rocky vault and walled her inside where she was to die for her crime. When Creon got back, his son Haemon started to argue about the fate of Anitgone. Haemon was going to marry her, but now his own father wanted her dead. Haemon vowed never to return unless his love was released. Creon refuses to agree to free Antigone. Haemon storms out, and goes to first bury Polynices, then to find Antigone. When Haemon finds Antigone she has already hung herself. Creon arrives a short while after Haemon finds his love dead. Haemon first swing sword at Creon, then he shoves it into himself. Creon’s wife Eurydice hears from a messenger that her last living son has now killed himself. She blames it on her husband as she kills herself. Creon arrives and acknowledges that everything is his fault. He asks to be taken away. He is brought to the a palace, and that is where the play ends.

Creon’s leadership wsa hurt greatly because of his immoralistic character. Creon states that there are other women for his son to love when he states “There are other fields for him to plow”. (lines 642-643) Creon also believes that his son should obey his father’s request no matter what the circumstances. He tells of this when he says “That’s how you ought to feel within your heart, subordinate to your father’s will in every way”. (lines 713-714) Creon took his power a step too far by insisting that everything be done his way, and I believe that is one of the reasons that he fell apart as a leader.

Creon also suffered from a lack of rock solid principals. When he said ” I am in no mood to trade insults with a seer” (line 1168), he showed me that he felt that as a king he thought he was a better person than all others. He felt he had no time for ordinary people because he was of higher being. He also said “Not a word of hope-your doom is sealed” (line 1025). It bothered me that he had the absolute lack of compassion because he said this when he was about to seal the fate of his own niece. To be a good leader you must have rock solid principals to fall back on in times of stress. Creon lost grasp of these, and that contributed to his demise as a leader.

Creon lost his sense of judgement when he became an all-powerful ruler. There are many examples of this throughout the play. When Creon was talking to Ismene he said “Death would do it for me-break off their marriage” (line 648), this showed that he had lost grip of what was important to him and his family. He only looked at negative aspects of the issue. He didn’t realize how bad he would hurt his family by killing Antigone. He goes on to further prove my point when, at the end of the play, he states “I murdered you, my son, against my will- you too, my wife” (lines 1462-1463). By this statement he means to take all blame for what has been done, and show that he had little sense of judgement at the time of the incident.

As a leader Creon was a lost, undefined, wreck of a man. The power that came with his postition destroyed him. He lost control of what was important to his city and his family. As he became blessed with total control his character, principals, and leadership deteriorated. In the play Creon stated “You cannot know a man completely, his character, his principals, sense of judgement, not till he’s shown his true colors, ruling the people, making laws” (stated in question #1). There is no better way to describe the reasons for the crumbling of Creon as a man than that statement. He was unable to stand-up for his own family when faced with adversity, and in the end that is what destroyed his ability to lead his city.