

Achilles, the greatest warrior of the Trojan War, and Anakin Skywalker, the protagonist of the *Star Wars* film series, are very similar to each other. Each has a special destiny, which each fulfills. Achilles dies while helping the Greeks destroy Troy, and Anakin Skywalker, the Chosen One of the Jedi Order, kills Sith Lord Darth Sidious and destroys the Sith Order. Both are also great warriors who succumb to their rage. Achilles, the mightiest of the Greek heroes, kills Hector in revenge for the death of a friend, and Skywalker, one of the greatest Jedi Knights, falls to evil and becomes Sith Lord Darth Vader.

Both of these characters are called to war by a special destiny. In the case of Achilles, it is prophesied that he will either live a long, peaceful life or will die young but gloriously at Troy. This prophecy leads his mother Thetis to attempt to hide him from the Greeks. This eventually fails, but his son, Neoptolemus, was conceived while he was in hiding. The prophecy eventually leads him to his death in the tenth year of the Trojan War. The prophet Calchas also foresaw that Achilles' presence was required for the Greeks to win the Trojan War. Thus, by going to Troy, Achilles fulfills a special destiny, one of the staples of the archetypal hero. Likewise, Anakin Skywalker has a special destiny as the Chosen One. As the mysterious Chosen One, his destiny is to destroy the Sith order and restore balance to the Force. He is, in effect, a messianic figure to the Jedi. He actually manages to fulfill this destiny, though not in a context that anyone could have foreseen.

Achilles and Anakin Skywalker are also masterful warriors who are instrumental to their sides' war effort. Homer's *Iliad* frequently describes Achilles butchering Trojan warriors and leaders. Achilles also kills a number of important Trojan heroes and allies,

such as Prince Troilus of Troy, Queen Penthesilea of the Amazons, Memnon of Ethiopia, and Cycnus of Kolonai. However, his most impressive achievement occurs when he defeats Hector, Troy's prince and greatest defender. Achilles slaughters the Trojan army on his way to the walls of the city then slays Hector after chasing him around the walls of the city three times. Thus Troy's champion is slain. Anakin Skywalker also acquits himself well on the field of battle. He fights at the Battle of Geonosis and many other battles in the Clone Wars, including a notable incident in the novel *Jedi Trial* in which he defeats a vast number of battle droids almost single-handedly at the Battle of Praesitlyn in order to capture Admiral Pors Tonith, the commander of the Separatist forces there. He also crosses blades with Asajj Ventress, Count Dooku's personal assassin, on a number of occasions, and kills the infamous bounty hunter Durge, who had killed numerous Jedi Knights throughout the war. He even manages to kill Sith Lord Count Dooku, the leader of the Separatist insurrection, close to the end of the war, though this eventually contributes to his downfall.

Both characters also surrender to their anger and hatred. After the death of his friend Patroclus at the hands of Hector, Achilles kills Hector in revenge. Achilles then ties Hector's body to his chariot and drags it around the battlefield and the tomb of Patroclus without burial, thus denying Hector a place in Hades. Achilles continues to do this until King Priam, Hector's father and king of Troy, begs him to return the body. Similarly, Anakin Skywalker falls to his anger often during his life. He massacres the Tusken Raiders who killed his mother in a fit of rage and murders Count Dooku after defeating him. Shortly after this, he grew resentful at the Jedi for seemingly not acknowledging his abilities and for making it difficult for him to save his wife, Padme,

who he believed was dying. In order to save her, he allies with Supreme Chancellor Palpatine, who reveals himself as Sith Lord Darth Sidious, and becomes Darth Vader. After killing most of the Jedi and remaining leaders of the Separatists, Vader uses the Force to choke his wife when he believes that she has betrayed him to his former mentor Obi-Wan Kenobi. After a duel on the volcanic world of Mustafar, Vader is left for dead, severely burned and with most of his limbs severed. Sidious later finds him and reconstructs his body with prosthetic limbs and black armor, which doubles as a life-support suit. Vader remains in this state for over twenty years, until he redeems himself by saving his son, Luke Skywalker from death at the hands of Sidious. He then dies, having redeemed himself.

Both characters strongly resemble each other. Achilles is widely regarded as the greatest warrior of the Trojan War. He is stronger and more skilled in war than any of the other Greek heroes sent to reclaim Helen of Sparta from the Trojans. Additionally, he is nearly invincible, having been bathed in the River Styx as a child. It is foreseen that his presence is necessary to defeat the Trojans. However, he falls to his anger and arrogance in the final year of the war, though he manages to rise above it before his death.

Similarly, Anakin Skywalker is one of the greatest Jedi to fight in the Clone Wars. Like Achilles, he is a great warrior, strong in the Force and skilled with a lightsaber, and like Achilles, he has a special destiny as the Chosen One who will destroy the Sith Order and bring balance to the Force. Anakin Skywalker also suffers due to his anger, and is eventually destroyed by it, becoming the Sith Lord Darth Vader. Ultimately, however, he is saved from evil before his death by his son, Luke.