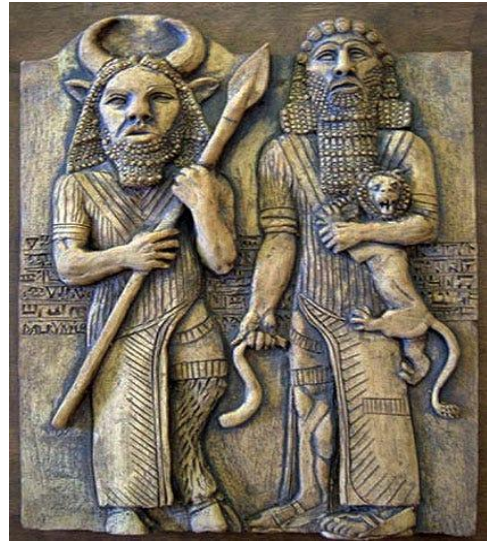


Personal Connections 3 - Gilgamesh Friendship

In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the relationship of Gilgamesh and Enkidu starts out as a bitter rivalry but eventually grows into friendship. Enkidu, who was made by the gods to challenge Gilgamesh, becomes friends after they fight and recognize each other's strength and power. Their friendship changes Gilgamesh from a cruel ruler into a more compassionate and self-aware person. Together, they do many great things like, defeating Humbaba and the Bull of Heaven, this strengthens their relationship. When Enkidu dies, Gilgamesh is overwhelmed with sadness and fear. The loss forces Gilgamesh to confront his mortality and search for how he can get eternal life. Eventually, he learns that human legacy, not immortality, gives life its real meaning, and makes it worth living.



I have had many different friends over the years, and each one has taught me something unique throughout my life. At different times, I've had different best friends who helped shape who I am. For example, my best friend in high school taught me not to take life too seriously and that it's not just okay—but necessary—to slow down and take breaks. During my junior year, I lost a friend to suicide,

which changed how I viewed the world in a big way. That loss helped me realize what truly matters in life: relationships with others, with myself, and with God. It reminded me never to take people for granted and to express my love and appreciation more often. Because of these experiences, I now value deep connections more and try to live with greater empathy and purpose.

My story and the story of *Gilgamesh* both show how friendships help shape who we are now and who we will become later. Just as Enkidu helped Gilgamesh grow and learn to be more compassionate, my friends have helped me become a better person through both joyful moments and painful losses. When Enkidu died, it gave Gilgamesh a new perspective on life and helped him realize what truly matters. I had a similar experience when I lost someone I loved, and it led to deep personal growth. Both experiences show how fragile life

is and how important it is to hold on to meaningful connections. Moving forward, I want to continue growing in empathy, like Gilgamesh did, by showing up for others and offering support when they need it. Friendship, as both stories show, isn't just about having fun—it's about helping each other grow into better people.

