
The Kite Runner: The Themes Of Justice And Destiny

“There is a way to be good again”-Rahim Khan. “The Kite Runner” by Khalid Hosseini is, without a doubt, one of the best books I have ever read from all perspectives. Right from the minute, I opened the book, I was immersed in a world of paradoxes: A world of redemption, love, betrayal, cruelty, survival, longing for acceptance, jealousy, and loyalty. It had me shaken and thrilled all the way! The story is set in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. The Kite Runner is a story of two very close friends: Amir and Hassan. Amir and Hassan, the two inseparable friends and experts at kite flying had to do their best to win the local kite-flying tournament. Amir thought that winning the kite flying tournament and bringing home the kite of his final opponent is the only way he could redeem himself to Baba and gain his affection which would ultimately relieve Amir of his guilt over his mother’s death. Another reason he wanted to win the local kite-flying tournament was that, as a child, Amir was Jealous of Baba’s love and affection towards Hassan. Amir believed that he was the one that deserved Baba’s affection unaware that Hassan is his half-brother. Amir found out the shocking truth later in the book. Amir was correct to some extent initially but unfortunately; this happiness was short-lived.

Sadly, just like the kites fighting in the sky, war came to Afghanistan and tormented people’s hearts. During the war, people living in Afghanistan had to make hard decisions and great sacrifices. On one occasion, the young Amir betrayed Hassan’s trust which haunted Amir for the rest of his life. This act of betrayal occurred when Amir allowed Hassan to be raped during the war by Assef. This incident has shaped Amir’s personality ever since and sets the rest of the novel in motion.

Afghanistan became an extremely dangerous place, so Amir and his father undertook to flee to America. As an adult living in America, Amir was unable to overcome his guilt from that childhood incident where he committed an act of betrayal towards Hassan which continued to shape his actions as an adult. This guilt over his inaction during Hassan’s rape made him constantly miserable and this tragic mistake he committed centered on his growth from a selfish child to a selfless adult. As an adult, Amir could only redeem himself by proving he has the courage to stand up for what is right. In one incident, after receiving a call from Rahim Khan, his father’s business partner and Amir’s childhood friend about the murder of Hassan and his wife, Amir decided to return to Afghanistan in order to seek redemption and set things straight. He had to sacrifice his comfort to gain himself and end the cycle of the sin of betrayal. Thus, the Kite Runner becomes Amir’s quest of rectifying the wrongdoings he had committed as a young boy living in Kabul. The past has always been trapped within Amir, from the first sentence of the book when he said, “I became what I am today at the age of twelve,” to the last sentence. Another piece of evidence to prove that the past is a fundamental part of Amir, and what defines and drives Amir’s actions is when he said on the first page that the past can’t be buried. The persistence of the past is one of the key themes in the novel and one that influences Amir to become the person he became. This recurring theme distinguishes it from other books.

Another key aspect in the novel is the development of the ‘father-son relationship. Amir had a very complex relationship with Baba, and as much as Amir loved Baba, he rarely felt that he had fully gained Baba’s affection/love. Amir’s desire to win Baba’s love consequently motivated him to not have an action/ response toward Hassan’s rape. This is because Hassan’s incident

occurred on their way home from the kite flying tournament and Amir wanted the kite to bring to Baba, and Hassan was the price he had to pay. Baba found it hard to connect with Amir. He felt guilty when he treated Amir well when he could not acknowledge Hassan as his son because Amir didn't find out the shocking truth until later in the book- (that Hassan was his half-brother). Thus, he was hard on Amir, and can only show his love for Hassan indirectly, for example, when he brought Hassan along when he took Amir out or when he paid for Hassan's lip surgery. Winning the local kite-flying tournament was a turning point for Amir and Baba in terms of their character development and growth. To highlight this complex relationship, the narrator uses the metaphor of kite flying to signify the changing 'father-son relationship'. Through this metaphor, Amir became an expert at kite flying, a better person, and a better son in the eyes of his father. However, all of this was short-lived after Hassan's incident. It didn't just impact the relationship between Hassan and Amir, but Amir and his Baba also. It made it difficult for Amir to live with Hassan in the same house: "I made sure our paths crossed as little as possible." So, Amir goes on to ask his Baba if they could get new slaves, but this question came with the terrible consequence that the relationship that Amir had always wanted with his father for years came to an end. "I regretted asking it ... but I think ... our happy little interlude would have come to an end. Maybe not quite so soon, but it would have," this indicates that Amir has and will always remain to be an outsider in his father's life.

Overall, "The Kite Runner" looks at how Amir felt and dealt with the persistence of the past and how that influenced who he became. I really enjoyed the fact that this book has a sense of justice and destiny. Despite all the terrible incidents, good overcame evil eventually. The characters, Afghanistan, the scenes, everything just seems so alive and realistic that I could in many occasions put myself in their shoes and experience the plethora of the experienced emotions that lied within each character, making it difficult for me to put the book down for a moment. Everything in this book is heartbreaking but at the same time heart-warming. I would recommend this book to everyone because it certainly has a true connection with humanity, it's culturally relevant, and it deals with universal life-related issues. There are so many plot twists that would shock and leave you sitting on the edge of your seat. Hosseini has written a true masterpiece!