

Character Analysis of Knight in Canterbury Tales

Socially, the Knight is by far the most prestigious person on the pilgrimage. He has fought in many battles and served his king nobly. (Readers should note that the Knight has not fought in secular battles; all his battles have been religious battles of some nature.) He is the very essence of chivalry, honor, and courage. Similarly, he is the epitome of gentility, a man who loves truth, freedom, and honor. Everyone in the pilgrimage looks up to and respects him.

Despite his elevated position, the knight is also filled with humility. He does not participate in the quarreling or complaining, nor does he condemn it. Although he has distinguished himself several times in battle, he never talks about his brave and valorous deeds. He is completely satisfied with his station in life and is courteous to the other pilgrims without becoming friendly with them.

The Knight's Tale perfectly fits the Knight himself. He chooses a story filled with knights, love, honor, chivalry, and adventure. The main emphasis in the story is upon rules of honor, decorum, and proper conduct. For his hero, he chooses the Greek hero of legend, Theseus, who was the most highly thought of man in Ancient Greek culture; indeed, Theseus was the King of Athens, and Sophocles, in the Oedipus Trilogy, presents him as the ideal king. Thus Theseus, like the Knight himself, is an embodiment of all the ideal human virtues.