

# A person with a weak heel

[Parts of the World](#), [Europe](#)



Homer's Iliad is a poem that deals with various emotions and addresses the complexity of these said emotions. From lust filled desires that led to a war that waged on for 10 years to meddlesome gods that took control of the mortals, Iliad covers it all. The central theme around which Homer revolves his story is "The Wrath of Achilles".

Achilles, a man in search of personal glory and consumed by his pride and his might undergoes a chain of emotions from feeling his honour being questioned to rage to indifference and finding his way back to rage. His wrath is also a major catalyst as to why the war progressed for quite a long time.

The wrath has its roots from the moment Agamemnon takes away a concubine of Achilles during the time of war of the Greeks against Troy. Enraged, Achilles is determined to involve in the war against Agamemnon; but the Gods intervene and Achilles subdues his anger and decides to go rebel silently. He instigates Thetis (his mother) to convince Zeus to help the Trojans so that the Greeks would lose.

As Zeus helps the Trojans in their war efforts and Achilles, the most powerful ruler the Greeks had ever seen, The Greeks were on the losing front. Achilles who was still consumed by his pride refused to partake in the war. The war led to the death of numerous Greek soldiers and thus, softened yet proud, Achilles unwillingly his friend Patroclus to the field to fight for, Patroclus was a fine fighter. The belief was that the Trojans would back off from the war, the moment they realise that the mightiest warrior who once went on self-proclaimed exile had come back. On the war grounds, Hector confronts

Patroclus who was in Achilles' armour and attacks him. Patroclus dies on the field whilst Hector removes the armour and wears it as his own with pride.

Achilles is enraged and struck with grief when he hears that his beloved friend Patroclus suffered a horrible death on the field and thus, the "wrath" is imposed on everyone in the war. Achilles suffers a pain unfathomable to the common man and thus begins, his quest to avenge the death of Patroclus.

The theme in Iliad is established through this act. From the first book, Achilles has always been portrayed as the man who is so powerful, yet cannot control his emotions and lets them flow. His indifference to the war, followed by absolute rage is definitive proof of the same. Thus, Achilles undergoes a cycle of emotions during the war. The emotions which Achilles expresses goes on to set the background for the changes that Achilles as a character underwent throughout the entire plot of the poem.

As aforementioned, Achilles' rage knew no bounds. Anger seared through him and he wanted revenge. Vengeance for the lost lives and more particularly, for Patroclus. He vowed to avenge his friend's death and will not stop until he does so. Achilles charges into war, in search of the man who killed Patroclus. As Achilles finds Hector in the war, his anger is two-fold, for he sees Hector wearing Achilles' armour, the one Patroclus wore to the war grounds which Hector so proudly and cockily wore around.

When might meets rage, the effects are certainly unimaginable. Achilles chases Hector around the city till they finally decide to duel with each other.

Achilles is clearly aware of the armour's weak points and thus, throws a spear at Hector's throat and thus leading to Hector's death. Before his death, Hector had a wish that his body should be sent to Trojans' for burial. Achilles still consumed with rage refuses his last wish to be fulfilled.

Unsatisfied with the death, Achilles drags Hector's body mercilessly around the city three times. Hector's body dangles from the chariot hitting every stone and pebble as he was dragged around.

At this point in the book, it is evident that Achilles went in search of a relief that he wanted from the anger he developed. Killing Hector from a mere stab wasn't satiable for Achilles. He tries to justify his actions through the anger he holds against the entire war. His anger against Agamemnon and his anger against the Trojans especially Hector still hadn't subsided. Albeit, he reconciled with Agamemnon, the anger still persisted. A few character flaws such as this reminds us of the fact that Achilles at the end of the day is a mortal.

As Achilles carried Hector's body around the city, Hector's parents King Priam and Queen Hecuba were in trauma and grief for their son was being paraded in front of them. King Priam solicited for Hector's body so as to hold a proper funeral for him. Achilles, being ever so merciless, reprimanded King Priam.

After twelve days, the Gods were tired of Hector's body being dragged around and thus, asked Thetis, mother to Achilles to convince her son to give

up the anger and let King Priam conduct an honourable funeral for his son. King Priam offers Achilles gold equivalent to that of Hector's weight.

Since the tempting offer was kept on the table, Achilles agreed to the same and even volunteered to stop the Greeks from fighting, so that Hector's body could be disposed of away with dignity.

At the end of Book 24, the two teams call for a temporary truce. The treatment of Achilles is done in such a way that, albeit a mighty ruler, he does show a soft corner. At least when it comes to the inevitable – death. The book ends with Achilles letting go of the anger and rage he once held and accepting the situation and moving on. In the end, it is wise after all to be accepting of the situation and let go.