

# Essay on the aeneid

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



## **The Aeneid**

### **The inadequacies of Aeneus**

In the Aeneid, Aeneus falls short of achieving the Homeric hero status due to certain inadequacies. He has certain attributes of the Homeric hero such as being a person who is on a quest. He faces complex decisions in obeying the command to found the city of Rome. However, even though he is the son of a god, his humane characteristics are more displayed in his life. This display of human characteristics makes him slightly different from other Homeric heroes. He does not display model behavior like other heroes.

Juno, the goddess, has a plan to prevent Aeneus from fulfilling his destiny. She plans how Aeneus will be distracted by Dido. One night, Aeneus and Dido are trapped in a storm. They seek shelter from the storm in a cave and during the night they end up having sex. Jupiter has to send a message through Mercury to Aeneus to remind him of his destiny. Jupiter tells him that the marriage or relationship with Dido was not the reason why he saved Aeneus from the Greeks. He has to fulfill his destiny and think about the future of his son. Aeneus dismisses Dido coldly, hurting her feelings. She is so overcome with feelings for him that as she watches him leaving she kills herself. It is only after seeing her spirit wandering in the underworld, that Aeneus learns what happened and he is overcome by remorse. His inadequacy in controlling his emotions is further seen when the old warrior Priam is killed on the altar by Pyrrhus, the Greek soldier. Aeneus is dismayed. When he sees Helen, whose beauty is the cause for the attack and fall of Troy, he becomes enraged and wants to kill her. Again he has to be reminded of the true mission or his path of destiny. Venus appears to him

and tells him to take his father, Anchises, his wife, Creusa and his son out of the city which is under siege by the Romans.

### **Comparison between Aeneas, Achilles and Odysseus**

The Greek hero fought for personal glory and recognition. When Achilles enters the battlefield he fights savagely and mercilessly. He does not want the Greek soldiers to gain all glory for themselves. He wants part of the fame. Aeneas is different in that even at the battlefield he has mercy on Lausus and Mezentius when he kills them. They fill him with thoughts of his father and son. The Roman hero fights for the glory of the Roman people or community. Aeneas fights for the Roman Kingdom and the future of his son.

Odyssey and Aeneas both display certain weaknesses and strengths.

Odyssey refuses to obey the well-known customs of the people and invites wrath from the gods. However, Aeneas is dutiful and respectful. He listens to the prophecies from the gods that guide him in his journey. He listens to Jupiter's and Venus' instructions. He does not in any way provoke them.

When it comes to relations and interactions with women, Odyssey acts more like a gentleman. Aeneas tries to escape during the night and does not tell Dido when he is leaving. Secondly, he dismisses Dido's expressions of love for him very coldly. Odyssey tells the woman that he cannot remain in that place, he belongs to Ithaca.

Aeneas is a hero despite his human inadequacies. At the end he follows the path to his destiny as fate has determined no matter the costs incurred.

However, at the end of the Aeneid when Aeneas kills Turnus one may argue that he is not a hero. His fate is predetermined and he cannot lose the battle. Considering this point, then Aeneas may not really be a total hero since in all the events and battles he must have victory as it is his destiny to build Rome.