

Chaucers canterbury tales

Literature



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There are numerous themes and ideas presented through Chaucer's tales, including issues of women's rights, chivalry, thievery, nobility, and knavery. These subjects are expanded greatly by the fact that the various individuals in the story come from a variety of backgrounds representing as many aspects of medieval society as he could. This also connects Chaucer with these other authors as they also attempted to cover many of the main issues that affected society in their times. As he continues to present opposing viewpoints through his mixed company of pilgrims, Chaucer presents a story about the journey of religion up to this point and what it was intended to mean for the average person. Rather than being an individual journey of spiritual enlightenment, Chaucer suggests that the experience of religion is something that must be shared with others and explored from a variety of approaches before one can claim they have experienced religion. This brings him into particular alignment with Dante, who also focused his work on explorations of proper religious behavior. Chaucer's conception of religion as a journey shared by many people is evident in the idea of the journey itself, in which all travelers are brought to the same level despite other social constructions; the activities of the journey as each individual is required to tell two tales as a means of passing the time; and the lessons learned within these tales as they are often placed side by side with an opposing viewpoint.