

Educated chivalry versus human nature flaws, a battle in sir gawain and the green...

[History](#)



Sir Gawain and the Green Knight was a classic work of literature written by an unknown poet. This poem was written to display how Knights were to be chivalrous and heroic. It also show the faults in humankind. These traits are portrayed through the character of Sir Gawain, who is challenged by the Green Knight. Gawain steps up to the challenge to show how knightly he is. Although Sir Gawain is a knight of great confidence and bravery, he is presented in the poem with very human fears and misgivings.

In the poem, Sir Gawain is very knightly and heroic. The Green Knight appears to the knights of King Arthur's round table. The knight challenged anyone who would step up to swap a lick with him once a year. King Arthur and knights were so astonished that no one dared to make a move. Until Sir Gawain surprised everyone. "Gawain stepped to the stranger, axe in hand, and he, never fearing, awaited his coming" (64). This shows extreme courage and heroism. No one else but Gawain had the courage to step up and face the unfamiliar Green Knight. He even shows this courageous behavior later on in the poem when he journeys to the Green Chapel to face the Knight yet again. He never backed down from the challenge, which is very brave and knightly. Gawain was outstandingly heroic.

Although Gawain was seen as a hero, he unfortunately still had some human characteristics. Before travelling to the green chapel to face the knight again, Gawain become frightened. He is fearful for his life, even though he had shown no fear before. Gawain falls to human error and accepts a gift from the lady of the house out of fear. A green girdle. Gawain takes it because he is frightened for his life and thought it may help him. Gawain did not back down from the challenged, regardless of his fear. At the green
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chapel he faces the Green Knight again, but his lack of bravery appears. “ Then the Green Knight made him ready and grasped his grim weapon to smite Gawain. With all of his force he bore it aloft with a mighty feint of slaying him: had it fallen as straight as he aimed, he who was ever doughty of deed had been slain by the blow. But Gawain swerved aside as the axe came gliding down to slay him as he stood, and shrank a little with the shoulders, for the sharp iron” (72). Gawain’s fear became so great that he had ducked away from his blow. Although Gawain had been very brave before, he still was human. Sir Gawain had still fallen to the inner demons humans are faced with.

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight beautifully displayed knightly virtues of chivalry, heroism, and the faults of human nature. Gawain heroically stepped up to the Green Knight’s challenge, ever so bravely. Unfortunately he could not uphold his knightly virtues. As knightly as Sir Gawain was, he still fell to the weaknesses of a human.