

# [Literature of western world](https://assignbuster.com/literature-of-western-world/)

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submitted Literature of Western World One of the most renowned works by Chaucer is unquestionably The Canterbury Tales. In Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, the story opens with a description of twenty nine individuals going on a pilgrimage. The individuals discussed or the characters possess distinct personality. For instance the author makes the Wife of Bath to be more outstanding as compared to others. She is described explicitly to provoke shocking response. According to Petterson, her physical features and her clothes are discussed in a manner that is likely to confuse the reader whether she really fits in the rules imposed by Christian authorities in references to womanly conduct. There were two categories of women in regards to Christian tradition; those representing the saints and those representing sinners. For instance, Eve led to the downfall of all men, whereas, the Virgin Mary symbolized purity. The Wife of Bath is headstrong bold woman who proudly shows off her Sunday cloths (57). When we look at the Miller, the Manciple, and the Reeve, we find out that all are stewards who everyone can trust with their properties. However, all of them abuse this trust. Stewardship plays a symbolic role in the Canterbury Tales just like in the Christian context. Obviously, Jesus used stewardship as a mentor for Christian lie. The character traits of these three characters can be compared to God’s call for everyone to account for their actions on the Judgment Day. Just as stewards the characters must account whether they made a profitable use of their master’s property. The other two characters who stand out as rare examples of Christian ideals are the Parson and the Plowman. For instance the Plowman follows the Gospel, loves God and his neighbor as well; he also works for Christ’s sake, and faithfully offers tithes to the Church. The Parson has a more complicated role as compared to the Plowman since he treats himself with importance. Both the tragedy of King Lear and Oedipus Rex present a case of tragic literature and also a cathartic effect to the reader of both. It is believed that the lower the social status of the tragic hero, the weaker the ability of the 1090’s audience to identify or the ability relate the idea with the character flaws. Either King Leah or the Oedipus tries to foolishly challenge fate and evade prophecy which in turn proclaimed that he would murder his father and marry his mother. The two stories relate to one another in the sense that both involve social problem sin the society whereby in the tragedy of King Leah, we find that the divides his Kingdom amongst two daughters, Regan and Goneril (66). Moreover, Oedipus only has one major flaw but all the same it was able to fall despite the high social status. In order to provide an explanation as to how these three female characters deal with infidelity: a) Medea (in Medea by Euripides), b) Dido (The Aeneid, written by the Roman author Virgil), and c) the Wife of Bath (in The Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer). It becomes clear that women are used as tools to achieve certain missions and in general all these collections are anti-feminist literature. We also find that women show sense of commitment even if it means that they have to lose those they are mutually related to. For instance, Medea who is a Princess of Colchis and an outsider woman agrees to help Jarson escape and she ensures that by chopping her brother into pieces and throwing him in the sea. She does this so that when their father is trying to gather the pieces they can easily escape. Dido stands for the two-enneagram (minor archetype) of pride. This is because she is the " helper, giver, and caretaker" to Aeneas. She plays an important role in The Aeneid because she acts as the foil, to help set Aeneas on his way to Italy. Dido offers everything to ensure that Aeneas moves on to complete his destiny and she becomes thoroughly dismayed by Aeneas infidelity. Finally she stabs/burns herself to erase the memories of Aeneas. The Wife of Bath in the Canterbury Tales of Geoffrey Chaucer also accuses her husband of infidelity by disguising her own adultery. In dealing with infidelity, the Wife of the Bath attacks her husband with fistful complaints accompanied by biblical justifications (Petterson 87). The first passage is a parable portraying wise sayings of Jesus, quoted from the book of Mathew in the New Testament. The moral lesson conveyed is that Christians must act or do as per the word of God for them to be strengthened and have a firm foundation. Their salvation and faith is compared to a rock, which is always firm. They can therefore overcome the evil tactics of the devil by first having the full armor of God; the holy word of GOD, and abiding by it always. This shall strengthen and give them hope and courage to face the day to day temptations and hence overcome them. The second passage is an extended metaphor. God is directly compared to light and more explanation is given, making a comparison and explaining further the relationship between the two. The quote is from the holy Quran. The moral lesson is that those who believe, trust and seek God will have a better understanding of Him. Their minds shall be enlightened and a more compact relationship formed between them and God. The third passage is fabliaux. It is a humorous tale about the life of a pilgrim and the challenges he went through. The quotations are from a book titled “ CHASING FRANSIS” by Ian M Cron. He creates humor by introducing the occurrence of danger with the word “ Behold”. He further says that the leopard never moved but blocked his way whenever he turned to go back! The moral lesson conveyed is that one can get conscious of some grave mistakes in life when almost drowning in them. It is at this moment when you try to get out that you are faced with a more dangerous situation or dilemma. You should therefore weigh an activity before undertaking or being involved. Finally, the fourth passage is an allegory. It is titled “ The miller’s Tale” and derived from The Canterbury Tales. It conveys message by symbolic actions and figures. Absolom symbolizes lust and evil in the society. He is driven by lust and ends up kissing the rear part of a woman instead of her lips. The moral lesson conveyed is that lust and immorality leads to regrets in life. We can therefore conclude by saying that great questions are what great literature brings to the feast of history. It is evident that when we unfold the past, fantasies and stories can sometimes say or sometimes be imaginary tale about what-really-happened than the " historical" records preserved for a very long time. Works Cited Lee Petterson. Geoffrey Chaucer's The Canterbury tales: a casebook. U. S. A.: Oxford University Press. 2007; pp. 23-241.