

**Chaucer – *Canterbury Tales General Prologue 1-42***

Whan that Aprill, with his shoures soote  
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote  
And bathed every veyne in swich licour,  
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;  
5 Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth  
Inspired hath in every holt and heeth  
The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne  
Hath in the Ram his halfe cours yronne,  
And smale foweles maken melodye,  
10 That slepen al the nyght with open eye-  
So priketh hem Nature in hir corages;  
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages  
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes  
To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;  
15 And specially from every shires ende  
Of Engelond, to Caunterbury they wende,  
The hooly blisful martir for to seke  
That hem hath holpen, whan that they were seeke.  
Bifil that in that seson, on a day,  
20 In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay  
Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage  
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,  
At nyght was come into that hostelrye  
Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye

25 Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle  
In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,  
That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.  
The chambres and the stables weren wyde,  
And wel we weren esed atte beste;  
30 And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,  
So hadde I spoken with hem everichon  
That I was of hir felaweshipe anon,  
And made forward erly for to ryse  
To take our wey, ther as I yow devyse.  
35 But nathelees, whil I have tyme and space,  
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,  
Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun  
To telle yow al the condicioun  
Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,  
40 And whiche they weren, and of what degree,  
And eek in what array that they were inne;  
And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.