**The General Prologue**

Whan that aprill with his shoures soote  1

The droghte of march hath perced to the roote,       2

And bathed every veyne in swich licour       3

Of which vertu engendred is the flour;       4

Whan zephirus eek with his sweete breeth       5

Inspired hath in every holt and heeth       6

Tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne       7

Hath in the ram his halve cours yronne,       8

And smale foweles maken melodye,       9

That slepen al the nyght with open ye       10

(so priketh hem nature in hir corages);       11

Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,       12

And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,       13

To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;       14

And specially from every shires ende       15

Of engelond to caunterbury they wende,       16

The hooly blisful martir for to seke,       17

That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.       18