

THE ILIAD

QUESTIONS OF 5 MARKS:

*****Write a short note on the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon in Homer's "The Iliad".**

Or,

Why does a conflict take place between Agamemnon and Achilles in "The Iliad"?

Ans - The conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles occurs over a woman named Briseis. Both Agamemnon and Achilles are awarded a woman as a trophy of war, but when Agamemnon is forced to release his captive, Chryseis, he decides that he is entitled to Achilles's captive, Briseis. Achilles is offended by Agamemnon's decision, and Achilles then decides to refrain from fighting for Agamemnon.

This conflict emerges at the beginning of the poem and is crucial to the advancement the plot. It also marks an interesting parallel to the cause of the Trojan War itself: a dispute over Helen between Menelaus and Paris. After the Greeks sack a city allied with Troy, Agamemnon and Achilles each make off with a young woman. When Agamemnon is forced to give up his "prize," a girl named Chryseis, he determines to take Briseis, who has been awarded to Achilles. Achilles angrily protests and orders his men not to fight with the Greeks. He seeks the support of Zeus, who aids the Trojans. They meet with great success, thus showing the importance of Achilles to the Greek cause. The disagreement, then, is really about honor. Agamemnon profoundly insults Achilles by taking Briseis from him, and since Achilles never really acknowledged Agamemnon's authority, he revolts. Even when Agamemnon agrees to return Briseis along with some gifts, Achilles still sulks in his tent .Only the death of Patroclus (disguised as Achilles himself) at the hands of Hector motivates Achilles to rejoin the fight . He avenged his friend's death by killing Hector, whose funeral marks the end of the poem.

To sum up, we may say that the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon characterizes both men . Agamemnon , for all his greatness as king and military commander, is jealous, greedy and selfish. Achilles characterizes firm determination and stubbornness.