

# SELECTIONS FROM VERGIL'S AENEID

## Book 1.1–209

**ARMA virumque canō, Troiae quī prīmus ab ōrīs**

*Ītaliā fātō profugus Lāvīniaque vēnit*

3 *lītora, multum ille et terrīs iactātus et altō*

**altum, ī n.** the deep (sea)

**canō, ere, cecinī, cantus** sing (of), chant, proclaim

**iactō** (1) toss, buffet

**Lāvīn(i)us, a, um** Lavinian, of Lavinium  
**profugus, a, um** exiled, fugitive

1–7. The theme of the poem, namely, the wanderings and wars of Aeneas, who after many struggles established the foundation for the greatness of future Rome, in accordance with the decrees of fate.

From the more extended introduction to the poem (lines 1–33) we learn: (1) the plan of the poet to describe the adventures of his hero, as is done in the *Odyssey*, and to depict wars and battles, as in the *Iliad*; (2) the importance of the gods, ruling over all mortal affairs, in the design of the poem; and (3) the story's relevance to Roman history, focusing as it does on the human trials that made possible the birth of Rome.

**1. Arma virumque:** the theme of the *Aeneid*; **arma** stands by METONYMY for *deeds of arms, wars*, referring to the wars in which Aeneas engaged, both in Troy and in Italy; **virum** refers to Aeneas, so well known that he is not mentioned by name until line 92. **Troiae:** with the first syllable long by position; App.

**6, b. quī prīmus ab ōrīs Troiae (ad) Ītaliā vēnit.** Aeneas was the first of the Trojans to come to Italy after his native city Troy had been captured, sacked, and destroyed by the Greeks in the Trojan War. Strictly speaking, the Trojan Antenor had preceded him, but Antenor's arrival, mentioned below at 242–49, is part of a narrative tradition different from that followed by Vergil here, and is not associated with the foundation of Rome proper.

**2–3. (ad or in) Ītaliā, (ad or in) lītora:** acc. of place to which; the omission of prepositions here is typical of Latin poetry, and you will see this often in the *Aeneid*; App. 315. **fātō:** abl. of means or cause; App. 331, 332; "through the will of heaven." **Lāvīn(i)a:** of Lavinium, an ancient city on the western coast of Italy, near the spot where Rome was later founded. Lavinium was said by many historians in antiquity to have been the first Trojan settlement in Italy and to have been named for Lavinia, the Italian princess whom Aeneas eventually married. Lavinia was the daughter of Latinus, king of the Latins. Lavinia herself first appears

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