



Compare and Contrast Analysis of William Blake's "The Tyger" and "The Lamb".

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ABSTRACT:-

The two poems present the contrasting features of William Blake's poetry. Lamb is a mild, innocent, sober, calm, and harmless animal whereas tiger is a terrifying, horror, and cruel animal. The present paper deals with the contrasting features of two animals and the contrasting power of God. The speaker is curious and wonder-struck with the power of God. These two are separate poems that appeared in different volumes of poems.

Keywords: - Tyger, lamb, god, power, creation.

William Blake is one of the revolutionary poets of the Pre-Romantic age. In the form, Blake was a revolt against the conventions of the Eighteenth century. "The Lamb" was published in the collection of poems "Songs of Innocence" published in the year 1789 and the poem "Tyger" was published five years later 1794 in the collection of poems "Songs of Experience", representing the contrary state of innocence and experience. The French Revolution opened the eyes of William Blake to tyranny. The Lamb is the symbol of Innocence as the Tiger is the symbol of tyranny.

The poem "Tyger" starts with the description of the ferocious appearance of the tiger which is a burning bright and daring animal. The speaker is wonder-struck by the power of God who created the fearful structure of the tiger as the phrase "immortal hand or eye". The second stanza describes the fire in the eyes of a tiger. Fire is pure and has the ability to burn everything, which may be the negative or positive impulse of nature, such ability is seen in the eyes of the tiger. Fire in the eyes of the tiger is divine power with fierce passion. The speaker wonders from where the All Mighty God brought the fire in the eyes of the tiger. Is it from the sky or the deep ocean? The power of God is appreciated; the Wings and Hands of God are used to bring fire to the eyes of the tiger. The third stanza praises God's power to create the heart of the tiger, the art of creating wide shoulders, physical strength as well and a strong heart. The skill of designing the muscular body and structure of the heart. The speaker is amazed to imagine how it would be to stand before a tiger when its heart starts to beat. The creator's hands and feet are very powerful enough to stand before the ferocious beast. In the fourth stanza, the speaker wonders about the types of equipment that the Creator uses to create the brain of the tiger. Divine tools like hammers and chains are used to fit a deadly brain in the tiger. The speaker wonders and questions the possibility of the daring ability of the creator to create the tiger. Stanza five deals with a comparison between the creation of the lamb and the tiger. Lamb is an innocent and meek creature, whereas the tiger is a contrast to it. Looking at the cruel animal even the stars threw their weapons and started to cry. Symbolically Satan and his followers accepted their defeat by looking at the ferocious tiger. The speaker is wonder-struck by the power of the almighty God who created the tender, innocent, and meek lamb and the cruel, ferocious, and terrifying tiger. The last stanza is the repetition of the first stanza: one word is changed, and "could" is replaced with "dare". The speaker challenges the one who can design the symmetry of the tiger except God.

The title of the poem is 'Tyger', William Blake used the letter Y instead of I to bring out the greater sound to indicate the power of the animal. The poet used the middle English spelling.

The poem 'Tyger' consists of six stanzas, each containing four lines. Each stanza contains question marks, these questions are in the tone of acceptance that none other than God alone can create the tiger. The speaker comprehends the existence of a ferocious tiger and meek lamb. None is evil or good but both are the product of nature and have to be accepted.

The poem 'Lamb' represents God's power of creating a lamb, an innocent, meek, and humble creature as opposed to the Tiger. The speaker asks who created the lamb and feeds it over the meadow by the stream. Lamb has very delighted clothes, very soft wool, and a very soft voice, the presence of Lamb makes the whole atmosphere joyful and happy. The speaker seems to be a child who asks who made thee, whether the lamb is aware of who created it. The almighty God is similar to the Lamb who is meek, mild, and childlike innocence. "I a child and thou a lamb, we are called by his Name" connotes a religious tone as Jesus Christ is meek, innocent, tender and whose presence brings joy to nature, child and lamb are the products of God. The Lamb is an indication of sacrifice as it is sacrificed for the sake of human evil. Thus the poem talks about Blake's own feelings of tenderness of childhood, joy, and beauty. This is what the divine grace and goodness of the lamb is produced.

There are two stanzas each stanza consists of ten lines. The poem starts with the rhetorical tone of who made thee, the first stanza goes with the implied question and answer that who made thee to be so enjoying and soft and tender, its God who made thee.

The second stanza is in the form of the answer that the God who is similar to you made thee. God is Lamb and Lamb is God. He is meek, mild, and childlike. Thus all three, Lamb, Child, and God are the same with similar features of purity, harmless and soft.

Several literary techniques are used in the poem such as alliteration, an allusion to Jesus, and metaphor- Child is Jesus or Child is God, He called himself a lamb, thus the metaphor is used to imply God, Lamb, and Child are the same. The poem has rhyming words such as – feed-mead, delight-bright, voice –rejoice and mild—child.

The repeated lines are also used to bring out the musical tone as well as to make it stand out and blessings:-

“Little lamb I’ll tell thee,

Little Lamb I’ll tell thee

Little Lamb God Bless thee,

Little Lamb God bless thee.”

These usages of literary techniques give the nature of lullabies and musical tone to ears. The language used in the poem is simple, clear, and lucid as the writer Trivedi says about William Blake's poetry ” They are the spontaneous utterance of the poet’s heart and he who is not touched by them must indeed be over sophisticated or dull of soul. Written in short rhyming lines and regular stanzas, they charm the ear with their fairy music” (252)

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