Poetry - 2.

Let me Not to the Marriage of True Minds

UNDERSTANDING THE POEM

Q. 1 'Constancy' is the theme of the poem. Indicate the words, phrases and images that suggest the theme.

Answer:

Constancy is one of the main themes of the poem because it makes any relationship last longer. Some phrases and images in the poem that suggest the theme are:

(i) "Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds"

(ii) "Or bends with the remover to remove"

(iii) "it is an ever-fixed mark"

(iv) "That looks on tempests and is never shaken"

(v) "It is the star to every wandering bark"

(vi) "Love's not Time's fool."

Q. 2 Why do you think the poet has used so many 'negatives' to make his statement?

Answer:

The poet has used multiple negatives in the poem to make his statement because by mentioning the negative aspects of Love, he can highlight the positive aspects more firmly. In the context of the poem, the poet has pointed out the negative events that are believed to be the consequences of love and emphasized the fact that love is not limited to physical, or earthly boundaries such as physical appearance, hearts etc. but goes beyond Time itself.

Q. 3 What does the line 'I never writ, nor no man ever loved' imply?

Answer:

This line implies that the poet is confident that his definition of love is absolute and challenges others to find errors in his definition or prove that his words are false. He is willing to stake his own profession as a poet to prove that love is just as he has described it to be and accept that no one is truly capable of love.

Q. 4 Love is presented as the subject or doer of actions in the poem. Why do you think the poet has used this form rather than involving human agents?

Answer:

The poet has personified Love as the subject and doers of action in the poem because the main theme is love. His goal is to bring out the true definition of Love. He has employed the device of personification and metaphors to describe Love's true nature which goes far beyond human limitations and fickleness of the human heart. By choosing to present Love as the main subject he has also brought up the subject of human nature which serves as a sharp contrast to the constancy and permanence of Love.

Q. 5 Explain the phrases a. his bending sickle’s compass b. Time’s fool

(a) bending sickle’s compass

(b) Time's fool

Answer:

(a) bending sickle’s compass- It refers to the sharp, metal curved tool used to harvest ripe crops and is swung in a circular motion. It is very similar to the scythe used by the Grim Reaper, according to legends, to cut short the lifespan of humans and bring them closer to death. In the poem, the poet says that true Love cannot be harvested by Death's tool but endures the deadly swipes and the effects of passing Time.

(b) Time's fool- By this phrase, the poet wishes to convey the fact that Love is not limited by Time. Time brings change in the form of decay, disaster and death to human beings who are limited by earthly boundaries. Time, however, cannot exploit or affect Love because it is immortal and indestructible. It is not subject to changes like the human heart and physical appearance. It remains steady, true, and unaltered.

TRY THIS OUT

Q. 1 This poem is a Shakespearean sonnet.

What do you understand by a sonnet?

Answer:

The word 'sonnet' was derived from 'sonetto' in Italian which means “a little song or sound”. It is a popular classical form of written literature which has inspired and influenced poets down the centuries. It consists of fourteen lines written in iambic pentameter which utilizes one of several rhyme schemes and follows a tightly structured thematic form. The two types which provide a model for others are- Shakespearean and Petrarchan sonnets.

Q. 2 This poem is a Shakespearean sonnet.

Look at some other sonnets and notice the variations in the structure of the sonnet that are possible.

Answer:

Variations in sonnets, in terms of structure, include Heroic Sonnets. It consists of eighteen lines instead of the traditional fourteen. Elements are: (i) metric iambic pentameter, (ii)made up of four alternate rhymed quatrains(iii) ends with rhymed heroic couplet, (iv) poem is summarized and concluded by the ending couplet, (v) rhyme scheme is ababcdcdefefghgh ii

Example is:

The Token by John Donne

Send me some token, that my hope may live,
Or that my ease less thoughts may sleep and rest;
Send me some honey to make sweet my hive,
That in my passions I may hope the best.
I beg no ribbon wrought with thine own hands,
To knit our loves in the fantastic strain
Of new-touched youth; nor ring to show the stands
Of our affection, that as that's round and plain,
So should our loves meet in simplicity;
No, nor the corals which thy wrist enfold,
Laced up together in congruity,
To show our thoughts should rest in the same hold;
No, nor thy picture, though most gracious,
And most desired, because best like the best;
Nor witty lines, which are most copious,
Within the writings which thou hast addressed.
Send me nor this, nor that, to increase my store,
But swear thou think's 'I love thee,' and no more.