

1. The Village Preacher

(From *The Deserted Village*)

- Oliver Goldsmith

1. Text

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,
And still where many a garden flower grows wild;
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.
A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year;
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change his place;
Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power,
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour; 10
For other aims his heart had learned to prize,
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.
His house was known to all the vagrant train;
He chid their wanderings but relieved their pain;
The long-remembered beggar was his guest, 15
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed;
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away, 20
Wept o'er his wounds or tales of sorrow done,

Shouldered his crutch and showed how fields were won,
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,
And quite forgot their vices in their woe;
Careless their merits or their faults to scan, 25
His pity gave ere charity began.
Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,
And e'en his failings leaned to Virtue's side;
But in his duty prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all; 30
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,
Allured to brighter worlds, and led the way.
Beside the bed where parting life was laid, 35
And sorrow, guilt and pain by turns dismayed,
The reverend champion stood. At his control
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul;
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,
And his last faltering accents whispered praise. 40
At church, with meek and unaffected grace,
His looks adorned the venerable place;
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.
The service past, around the pious man, 45
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran;
Even children followed with endearing wile,
And plucked his gown to share the good man's smile.
His ready smile a parent's warmth exprest;

Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distress: 50
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,
But all his serious thoughts had rest in Heaven.
As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,
Tho' round its breast the rolling clouds are spread, 55
Eternal sunshine settles on its head.

2. About the Author

Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774), one of the most popular of English writers of the 18th century was born in 1728 in a small village in Ireland. His father was a poor but kind-hearted clergyman. Goldsmith joined the Dublin University but left it without passing a degree. Later, he studied medicine in Edinburgh but took to writing after his long travel in Europe. In 1770, he published his first poem *The Deserted Village* that made him a popular writer. He wrote many works in prose, several collection of essays, one novel, *The Vicar of Wakefield* and two plays, *The Good-Natured Man* and *She Stoops to Conquer*. The two plays are impressive comedies. On the whole, Goldsmith left a large volume of appreciable work. He died in 1774, when he was only forty-six.

II 1-4

There is a place where unwanted bushes are growing thickly together. A few years back, a beautiful garden, along with the preacher's small house, existed there. Only a few torn shrubs are seen at present.

II. 5-8

The preacher was dearly loved by all the countrymen. His annual income was only forty pounds. This was not a large amount. Yet, his contentment made him feel happy as if he was quite rich. As a priest, he identified himself with the villagers. He never wanted to leave the poor villagers and settle down in an advanced city.

II. 9-12

In towns, a man seeks power and money by cringing before the rich and the highly placed. Some people changed their policy to suit the changing times. The preacher followed certain other valuable principles.

|| 13-16

The preacher was not interested in promoting his economic status. He was keen only on improving the lot of the poor people around himself. He helped the wanderer and the beggar. He treated the beggar as his honoured guest. The beggar had a long beard touching his chest.

|| 17-24

The others who came to his house were the bankrupt spendthrift and the disabled soldier. The soldier stayed by the fireside and, swishing his crutch like a sword, narrated the several battles in which he participated. The preacher's eyes glowed with pleasure when he listened to their talk. He forgot their vices when they described their misery.

|| 25-28

He pitied them even before actually helping them. He was proud to help them. The preacher had some failings. But even his failings appeared as virtues. For example, his helping even undeserving people like the spendthrift was certainly a vice. But, viewed from another angle, it was a virtue.

|| 29-37

The preacher wept over the sufferings of the poor. He was like a mother bird tenderly feeding its young ones and training them to fly. He tried out all possible methods to raise their lot. Sometimes he was gentle and sometimes harsh towards the

parishioners. His harshness was intended to correct the wrong-doers. He attracted them and induced them to lead pure lives. When a man was on his death-bed, racked by feelings of guilt and pain, the preacher stood by him and soothed him.

II 38-40

The preacher raised the trembling man above despair. A little before dying, the trembler whispered words praising the preacher.

II 41-44

The church where the preacher preached in a meek, graceful manner was a simple building. The truthful statements that he made were doubly effective. Some foolish people came to church to make fun of him. But they were influenced by him and stayed on to pray.

II 45-48

After the service was over, the rustics gathered round him in order to chat with him in an informal manner. Children plucked his gown in order to elicit his warm smile.

II 49-52

There was parental warmth in the preacher's smile. He was happy to hear about their welfare and sad to see their suffering. He gave his heart and love to his parishioners. But he concentrated all his thoughts on God.

|| 53-56

In this respect he was like a tall cliff. The base of the cliff is on the earth. Storms break round it. But the top of the cliff is unaffected by them. Similarly, the preacher's mind is unaffected by earthly problems. His mind always rests with God.

2. The Lamb

- William Blake

1. Text

Little Lamb, who made thee?

Dost thou know who made thee?

Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,

By the stream and o'ver the mead ;

Gave thee clothing of delight,

Softest clothing, woolly, bright ;

Gave thee such a tender voice,

Making all the vales rejoice?

Little Lamb, who made thee?

Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee :

He is called by thy name,

For He calls Himself Lamb.

He is meek, and He is mild ;

He became a little child.

I, a child, and thou a lamb,

We are called by His name.

Little Lamb, God bless thee!

Little Lamb, God bless thee!

5

10

20

2. About the Author

William Blake (1757 - 1827), mystic, poet, and artist, was born in London on November 28, 1757. His father, James Blake was a hosier and his mother Catherine, was a deeply religious woman. The poet showed his artistic tastes very early in his life. His creative faculty found an outlet in the early years in poetry, some of which has survived in his thin volume of *Poetical Sketches*, published in 1783. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to James Basire to learn engraving, which was to be his trade for life. Soon after his marriage with Catherine Boucher in 1782, Blake set up a print shop for a time. He began producing long and incomprehensible poetical works and engraving them himself. He just managed to make a living, and died in poverty in the year 1827. Some of his works include : *Poetical Sketches, An Island on the Moon, Songs of Innocence and of Experience, The Book of Thel, The French Revolution, The Visions of Daughters of Albion, Jerusalem* and some others.

Blake's mind was religious and his poems reflect his religious mysticism. Many of his poems depict the pervading presence of God in the universe and in the world of man.

3. About the Poem

The Lamb is one of the most simple and significant poems of Blake in the *Songs of Innocence*. Here the 'Lamb' stands for 'innocence'. The entire poem is in question-answer form, the child himself answering the questions put by him to the lamb. In the beginning, in his questions, the child gives a description of

the lamb as it appears to him. The 'lamb' has been endowed with life and beauty by God. The lamb is at first the symbol of God's created Innocence and later that Innocence is identified with Jesus, "the Lamb of God" symbol, by a beautiful turning of the poem. Here Blake stresses one important aspect of Christ, namely, His gentleness and protectiveness towards weak, defenceless creatures.

POETRY-I

SHORT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

THE LAMB

1. Who create the little lamb?

God creates the little lamb

2. What kind of person God?

God is a meek, mild and kind person.

3. What are the thinks given by God to the little lamb?

Life and clothing of delight are given by God to the little lamb.

4. What does the poem 'the Lamb' affirm?

The poem 'The lamb' is an affirmation of innocence and simplicity. It is an affirmation of God is Love and Blessing.

5. What does the Lamb symbolize?

The Lamb symbolizes the mercy, meekness and simplicity.

THE VILLAGE PREACHER

1. Where was the house of village preacher?

Once there was a beautiful garden in the village. Now it has become a forest with wild flowers. The village preacher's stood where there a Jew thorn shrubs.

2. Who were the guest of house?

A beggar, who was one a rich spend and a broken soldier, who won many battles were his guest.

3. What did the soldier to in the village preacher mansion?

The soldier to sit by the fire, wept his wounds and told the tales of his sorrow sometime he acted before the preacher to show how the bottle was won by them.

4. How did the village preacher treat the dying man?

When a man was on his death- bed, racked by feeling of guilt and paint, the village preacher stood by him and comforted him.

5. What was the method adopted by the village preacher to calm down the foolish people?

Some people came to church to make fun of the village preacher. But they were influenced by him and were converted by his words of faith.

6. What is the simile used towards the closes of the poem?

The top of a cliff is unaffected by the storms that may rage round it. Similarly, the preacher's mind is unaffected by earthly problems.

7. How did the village preacher react to the parishioners' problems?

The village preacher rejoiced at his parishioners' welfare and grieved at their distress. He shared their joys and sorrows.

Write an essay on the village preacher as a compound of manifold virtues.

1. Introduction

Goldsmith belongs to the eighteenth century. He is regarded as a precursor of the Romantic movement. During his time villages were depopulated on a massive scale. Villagers migrated to cities far and near in search of better prospects. The poem *The Deserted Village* deals with this dangerous trend. It shows the ruin of a beautiful village called Auburn. It was not only natural scenes that were laid waste. The remarkable personalities who lived in Auburn were also left to languish. The village preacher was one such man.

2. The preacher's goal

The Village Preacher had a noble goal. He was unselfish. He was interested not in rising himself but in raising the lot of the poor parishioners. He readily helped the people who came to his house. He treated even the beggar with love and affection.

3. The preacher's performance of his priestly duties.

The preacher had two important duties to discharge. One was to stand by the dying parishioner and talk to him soothingly and reconcile him to the prospect of imminent death. The dying parishioner's fear of leaving his near and dear ones and passing into the unknown beyond was lessened by the preacher's gentle talk. The dying man's last faltering utterance was in praise of the preacher's service. Thanks to the Village Parson, the dying wretch became conscious of the unbounding love and the infinite mercy of God.

4. The different approaches of the preacher

The preacher adopted a variety of techniques in dealing with the parishioners. He was gentle and mild towards some of them because they were amenable to reason. They could be corrected easily. Some others were inveterate sinners. The preacher treated them with severity. But this was a mere pose. He was basically merciful. Goldsmith compares the preacher to the mother bird which practises a variety of ways to train its young ones to fly. The preacher delivered memorable sermons in the church. So much so that even those who came with the intention of mocking at him were influenced by him and stayed to pray sincerely. The preacher was a charismatic personality.

5. Village preacher compared to tall cliff

Goldsmith winds up his portrayal of the village preacher with an apt epic or Miltonic simile. A tall cliff has its base on the earth. Storms move round and round the base of the cliff. The top of

the cliff soars into the sky. It is not at all affected by the storms. The village preacher's mind is like the top of the mountain. Just as the mountain top is not affected by the wind and the weather, the preacher's mind is not affected by worldly problems. It always rests undisturbed with God. All the troubles and vexations of life gather round him, but they are powerless to affect his thoughts, which are eternally centred on Heaven.

6. Conclusion

Summing up the character of the village preacher, Goldsmith declared that the good clergyman was always virtuous and sympathetic towards the sufferer and the sinner. His sense of duty took him wherever his presence was needed.

**Write a critical appreciation of Blake's poem
'The Lamb'?**

1. Introduction

The Lamb is one of the most simple and significant poems of Blake in the *Songs of Innocence*. Here the 'lamb' stands for 'innocence'. The entire poem is in question-answer form, the child himself answering the questions put by him to the lamb. The lamb represents the innocence, humility, and submissiveness of man. The poem also reflects Blake's religious mysticism.

2. The Lamb endowed with life and beauty

In the beginning, in his questions, the child gives a description of the lamb as it appears to him. The 'lamb' has been endowed with life and beauty by God. The lamb is meek and mild. It does not do any harm to anyone. It lives a contented life, grazing on the grass growing on meadows and river banks. Its soft and clean wool serves as clothing. It lives in harmony with nature and hence its tender bleating gives pleasure to the valleys echoing it. Blake equates the lamb to Christ who was

also as gentle and trustful as the lamb. The lamb is loved by children. The child in Blake's poem invokes God's blessings on the lamb.

3. Lamb—associated with Christ

A religious note is introduced in the second-half of the poem in the image of Christ as a child. The child, answering his own questions, says that the lamb has been made by God. Both the child and the lamb are 'little', but they are parts of His created universe. The lamb is at first the symbol of God's created Innocence, and later that Innocence is identified' with Jesus, "the Lamb of God" symbol. The line "He became a little child", refers to the miracle and birth of Christ who came to the world in the form of a child. Christ is an incarnation of love and tenderness. In the poem, the lamb, the child, and Christ are all identified with one another. They all share the same qualities - namely, meakness, mildness, and innocence. The lamb is a harmless creature. It is gentle and meek and allows itself to be butchered. Similarly Christ was gentle and did not harm anybody and allowed Himself to be crucified, forgiving the very people who killed Him.

4. The spirit of childhood glorified

The poem glorifies the very spirit of childhood—its purity, its innocence, and its tenderness, and that natural affection and sympathy that a child feels for small creatures. The goodness

of God-given innocence leads the poet to praise the worthiness of His creation. The child goes on to trace a similarity between itself and Christ. Christ was born a little child. Both the Lamb and the child are images of Christ.

5. Conclusion

In the poem, Blake stresses one important aspect of Christ, namely, His gentleness and His protectiveness towards weak, defenceless creatures. The lamb represents the innocence, humility, and submissiveness of man. The goodness of God-given innocence leads the poet to praise the worthiness of creation.