

"the marriage of
heaven and hell



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One of the most intriguing topics of discussion among people, especially among Christians, is the issue of the entities of Heaven and Hell. Many books and essays have been written by a multitude of authors attempting to explain the supernatural concepts of Heaven and Hell in human terms. Among these many literary works, one particular essay stands out as being informative, yet direct in the style of writing. "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" is the product of William Blake, who was born on November 28, 1757 in London, England. He devoted his life to writing, and many would consider William Blake to be more than just an author; instead many consider him a prophetic writer. "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell" is a metaphorical essay more than an allegorical essay over the topic of the supernatural realms, Heaven and Hell. The whole of the essay is written as an in-depth response to one of Blake's colleagues, Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish scientist and philosopher, and as an argument against organized religion.

The essay opens with William Blake introducing the main character, Rintrah, who many believe is a metaphor for or a parallel of Blake himself. Also, many literary critics view Rintrah as the spirit of revolutionary power and as a possible personification of the Just will of the Prophet. Using the title as a context clue, the reader, based off of the lines, "shakes his fires in the burden'd air; hungry clouds swag on the deep" can extrapolate the setting of beginning part of the essay as Hell.

To understand the essay as a whole, the reader must breakdown and analyze the two lines, "Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence." The first line, "Without Contraries is no progression," has

enormous meaning; in simple words this line can be rephrased, " Without disagreement humanity cannot progress. " This idea of competition creating " good" or progress is a Biblical concept. In Proverbs 27: 17, David writes, " Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another. Therefore, competition and opposing viewpoints are not only just a fact of humanity, but are essential for humanity to progress in a positive manner. The second line is a descriptive reiteration of the first line. The action words, such as attraction and repulsion, and love and hate, Blake utilizes as a way to describe how humans interact with each other in opposing manners, which ultimately allows humanity to progress. Another task accomplished by these two lines is they sum up Blake's argument against organized religion. William Blake sees organized religion as detriment to humanity.

He sees organized religion as being opposed to the one thing that allows humanity to grow in a positive way, competition. Blake sees organized religion as an entity that is blind to a concept that could be beneficial to religion as a whole, which would ultimately lead to more people hearing the message of Jesus Christ. The essay, " The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," though " to-the-point," in literary style, there is an enormous amount of depth to every part of the essay. As the main character travels throughout Hell, he experiences several different emotions such as anger and resentment.

In addition, the main character sees several scenes during his research and study humans. Then, William Blake continues on and writes about the main character's experience during his Journey through Heaven. Throughout his entire experience, both in Heaven and Hell, the main character sees how the

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different beings in their respective supernatural realms interact with each other and with human beings. Altogether this essay by William Blake does an excellent job of providing the reader with a seemingly prophetic insight into Heaven and Hell and how the two realms interact.