

William blakes the tyger and the lamb essay example

[Environment](#), [Animals](#)



William Blake's poems, "The Tyger" and "The Lamb" are directly related to each other in exploring the poet's theme of good and evil and the notion of a god that can create creatures which are at such different ends of the spectrum. The two poems share elements in common such as structure, rhyme, theme and the use of literary devices. However, within these devices, such as imagery, the poems vary, as they do in terms of tone. The two poems are integral to one another as they make up two parts of an essential system, as the animals depicted make up two parts of nature.

In "The Lamb," the animal is described as a defenceless, beautiful, innocent creature. "The Tiger," on the other hand, describes its animal as fearful and strong. The animals in these poems are, therefore, portrayed as directly opposite to each other.

Both poems follow a simple structure and rigid rhyming pattern. "The Lamb" is comprised of five quatrains and "The Tyger" is comprised of six. However, Blake has written both with an AABB rhyming scheme and both are also in iambic quatrameter. It works well as the poems are sisters to each other and so creating the similarity through structure is successful in echoing relationship. However, the language used in the two poems varies. "The Lamb" contains simple language with simple and easy to understand images and concepts. This use of language is a literary device to emphasize the purity and innocence of the lamb. "The Tyger," on the other hand, contains language and imagery that is more complicated and encourages the reader to think more deeply in interpreting its meaning. Again, this aids Blake's theme that the tyger represents the harsher, more complicated side of nature, and so it was an effective choice of writing.

In "The Tyger," Blake explores god and nature as being brutal, fearful forces, virtually animalistic in themselves. "The Lamb," conversely, suggests to the reader that god and nature are kind and tender. In writing these two poems, Blake is verbalising the question that many people ask at some stage throughout the course of their existence. Is it possible that a one all loving god could have created, or allowed into existence, both good and evil? Blake is posing this problem through the use of the two animals; in other words, it seems strange that the same god who created the beauty and innocence of the world could have also created brutality.

Both poems are laden with imagery and both are successful in highlighting their themes. A particularly interesting image in "The Lamb" is that of the lamb having woolly soft clothing (Blake (a), line 6). This, along with the other images surrounding it, creates a human aspect to the animal; the lamb is being compared to a small human child. This reference to woolly clothing directly contributes to this. "The Tyger" contains very different images such as when Blake mentions a hammer, chain and furnace. These images are all very masculine and violent as the objects being named are all used for forceful purposes. This type of imagery works well in the poem as the tiger is being portrayed as a masculine and violent animal. Furthermore, Blake's choice of spelling in the title of "The Tyger" immediately implies a mysterious or strange quality to the animal (Universal). The two poems contain very different imagery, creating a different tone in each poem. "The Tyger" has a menacing feel to it, whereas "The Lamb" has calm and gentle tone throughout.

In "The Tyger," Blake mentions "symmetry" (Blake (b), line 4). This is

significant as Blake is referring to “ The Lamb,” the other part of “ The Tyger.” What both animals have in common is that they are both elements of god’s creation. Together, these poems imply that both animals are of equal value in terms of nature. However, they differ in that the lamb in the poem signifies purity, youth, and the nicer elements of nature, whereas the tyger represents the more violent, fearful side of nature. There is beauty in both animals depicted within their respective poems. The tyger is beautiful in that it is elegant in its hunting and it has striking colours. Conversely, the lamb is beautiful in a childlike and vulnerable way.

Blake uses repetition in both poems, when addressing each animal. For example, in “ The Lamb,” he uses the line “ Little Lamb, I’ll tell thee!” in both the eleventh and twelfth lines (Blake (a)). Furthermore, in “ The Tyger,” the first line, and again in the final stanza, Blake writes, “ Tyger! Tyger!” (Blake (b)). Blake is emphasizing the animals as they are the symbols representing the overall theme of the poems.

Blake has written these two poems as integral to one another. Though they are similar in terms of structure and rhyme, the choice of language in each is very different, resulting in tones so dissimilar that they no longer seem related. While “ The Tyger” is more complex and, arguably, more satisfying to read, both poems are essential in conveying Blake’s intended meaning.

Works Cited

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