

Everyman him that
there is no returning
from



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Everyman is an old English morality play with an anonymous writer. The play presents the idea of salvation in the Christian context. It is believed that the author of the play wrote it during the late fifteenth century (Frohman, 10; Flesch, 179). The play shows Everyman traveling on a long journey to account his life to God.

The teaching the play presents is that God records Everyman's character and actions, which represents the actions and characters of an ordinary person, after death as in a book. On the other hand, The Wanderer presents the case of a man who is in exile and roaming the earth (Channing, 1). This man laments for the loss of his family members, friends and he hates being away from his kind king. In the middle of disillusionment and despair, The Wanderer remembers that it is good to have faith in God in order to be saved. According to The Wanderer, salvation is based on faith in Christ rather than in a man's own deeds. The Wanderer and Everyman have both similar and contrasting ideas. The author of Everyman used allegorical characters to present his message (Cummings, Para. 6).

These characters include Death, Everyman, God, Fellowship, Goods, Good Deeds, Knowledge, Strength, Five Wits, among others. The first scene of the play shows God looking at Everyman from heaven. He sees that Everyman loves the goods and possessions of this earth and has forgotten him. Everyman is young, rich and preoccupied with worldly things.

He not only forsaken God, but also despises his fellow human beings who are poor. God therefore becomes angry with Everyman and send his servant Death to take a message to Everyman that he has to embark on a long

journey (Effinger, para. 1). Everyman is therefore required to put himself in order and be ready for the journey because Death reminds him that there is no returning from that journey. Because of his love of the world, Everyman tries to bribe Death to leave him to continue enjoying his life on earth. However, Death refuses. Everyman tries to ask his Friends, Fellowship and Kinsmen to accompany him for the journey but they let him down.

After prayers and penance, his friend Good Deeds, whom he had forgotten for a long time, gets enough energy to accompany him and assist him in presenting his case before God. All the other friends who had promised to go with Everyman like Strength, Discretion, Beauty and Knowledge leave Everyman as he enters the grave. The wanderer is an old English poem that presents an old warrior who roams the world in search of accommodation and help (Gerould, 63). The poem is a monologue where the aging warrior presents his grievances.

The unknown author gives the introduction and conclusion of the poem. The wanderer is sorrowful for being in exile (Alexander, 63). He laments for losing his family members, friends, and his home and remembers his caring king. Through his dreams, the Wanderer sees himself in the company of his friends and kinsmen and sees himself embracing his king. He wakes up from his sleep to find himself in his exile, faced with gray winter, snowfall and hailstorms (“ The Wanderer Summary”, Para.

1). Further, on the Wanderer’s second monologue, he considers giving up self-control since he considers them similar to ways of meeting diversity. The wanderer also sees many negative things and destruction happening in

many places as he travels than in his own society. This poem also links the values of pagans and Christians in an unfair combination. The author's voice in the poem refers to God and shows the importance of having virtues like faith, an issue that the wanderer seems to have forgotten. The Wanderer through his lamenting, however, gives an indication of upholding values like loyalty, generosity, courage and strength. The wanderer appears resigned in life. The wanderer appears resigned in life ("The Wanderer poem," para.

3). However, at the culmination of the poem he brightly illustrates his lack of companionship and anticipates for the previous days in which life was more interesting. He finally concedes to his faith in God.

There are several themes and characters presented in both Everyman and The Wanderer. Some of these point towards similar ideas while others are contrasting. In both episodes, faith in God is presented and God is shown and acknowledged as the sole controller of the universe. Men are seen to forget God and concentrate more on the cares and concerns of earthly issues and only come to remember God when they are in problems. Everyman forsakes God and loves earthly goods and riches than God.

This is why he is not ready to leave his earthly possessions and even offers to bribe Death to leave him stay on Earth. Everyman remembers his good deeds when he finds that no one stands with him. We are also informed that he remembered the days he used to serve his God. The Wanderer also is too much worried of his fate on earth and forgets his God as he journeys the earth. The wonderer comes to remember his God when he is aging and admonishes us to put faith in God. They also agree that man needs some

virtues while travelling through this world. They agree that man often needs to put his relationship right with God. He needs generosity, strength, good deeds and courage.

For Everyman, he needed Good Deeds to present his case before God when he reached heaven. He also needed Strength, Beauty and Five Senses to go with him in the journey. The wanderer also admonishes us that we need strength, courage, generosity, loyalty and faith in God throughout our journey on Earth. These works use allegorical characters to present their message. While Everyman uses allegorical characters such as Goods, Good Deeds, fellowship, Five Senses among others (Cummings, Para. 6; Lawrence and Reich, 204), The Wanderer uses an allegorical character of "the life of a man in the image of a sea-journey" (Gordon, para.

1). There are a number of differences that can be identified from the two literature materials. Everyman is a play while The wanderer is a poem. Everyman uses many allegorical characters to present the message while the Wanderer uses one soliloquy character to present the message. The narrator in The Wanderer makes the introduction and conclusion.

Everyman believes that good deeds are necessary to save a person. This is why he goes for repentance and penance to give Good Deeds strength to accompany him in his journey. The Wanderer on the other hand believes in salvation by faith. He believes that faith in God is enough to save a person without deeds. Thus, The Wanderer presents the theme of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, while Everyman presents the theme of salvation by works. In

conclusion, the two literature materials present the themes of Christianity, isolation and betrayal by the trusted friends (Marin, Para.

2; Marsden, 327; Treharne, 42). They use characters that are in a journey on earth. The Wanderer is in exile while Everyman is traveling to God. Even though these materials present similar themes and messages, they also conflict in some ideas. Conspicuous in the texts is the difference in the means by which people gain salvation. While Everyman believes it is by works, The Wanderer believes it is by faith in Christ. Everyman and The Wanderer reflect the life of ordinary men on earth and their Christian walk.

Everyman shows the evils people do against their fellow human beings and against God. The two stories reflect the life on an ordinary person on earth and advices people to live a life they know they will give an account of at last.

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