

# Enlightenment and romanticism marriage of heaven and hell philosophy essay



**ASSIGN  
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Enlightenment, European intellectual movement of the 17th-18th century in which ideas concerning God, reason, nature, and man were blended into a worldview that inspired revolutionary developments in art. Central to Enlightenment thought were the use and celebration of reason. For Enlightenment thinkers, received authority, whether in science or religion, was to be subject to the investigation of unfettered minds. The search for a rational religion led to Deism; the more radical products of the application of reason to religion were skepticism, atheism, and materialism. The Enlightenment produced modern secularized theories of psychology, Romanticism was reaction against the Enlightenment, it emphasized the individual, the subjective, the irrational, the imaginative, the personal, the spontaneous, the emotional, the visionary, and the transcendental. a general exaltation of emotion over reason and of the senses over intellect

Romanticism, dangerous, as you will see as we do the Gothic, emotions were seen to be destructive and dangerous to society especially in women. Goethe a German poetry of the Enlightenment, although many of his writings have seemed quite Romantic, once said that ' everything thing that I call good I call the Classical and everything nasty and vile I call the Romantic..

Lets discuss it through line of plate .

P3 L8 : physical energy as contrasting the still contemplation of reason, and emotional energy like love and hate.

P3 L11-12 : religion demonized opposites and claimed that only one must be right. Therefore religion created good and evil. This could be another irony but it was also a serious concern to the Romantics and again you can see

him mixing things up saying that Good and Evil are joined, now like heaven and hell.

P3 L12-13: good is the passive that obeys Reason' this could be a referral to the Philosopher Kant or his mentality. Blake is showing here what Good and Evil have been considered to be. Good is meant to be like Reason, still and passive, Christianity has often been criticized as a religion which has been passive and actively seeking anything, this can be seen in the seclusion that monks lead. A good Christian is often or was then seen as quiet and obedient to the will of God. Evil, Blake is claiming, was the label given to ' the active springing from Energy'.

P3 L14: Here Blake is using the Enlightenment labels or historical labels of ' Good is Heaven. Evil is Hell.' This is Blake being ironic again as you will see he is saying that this isn't necessarily so.

P4 7-8: Blake condemns the idea that God will torment man for ' Eternity' for being simply human: for having emotions and desires.

P4 10-12: Here he is saying the Body and Soul are one, and joined, the body is the part of the soul which is discerned by the senses The Soul and body need each other for the full human experience.

P4 13-15: Emotion and energy is the only way to live or appreciate life and this important substance for life from the Body. Reason does have its part though, for unchecked emotions and desires are dangerous, and so Reason ' is the bound or outward circumference of Energy'. This basically means that it

is the fence to keep Energy running havoc and being destructive, it is not however the prison warden. Energy is now free range.

P4 L14: Energy is Eternal Delight. It is a delight to have emotions, desires, energy in general it is what makes being alive worth while. Even if we feel hate there is some joy in that. The fact that we can feel it. There is a Latin motto or dictum which sounds rather fancy to sound off if one can remember it and it is particularly important here to what Blake is saying. ‘

DiversitasDelectat’ which means variety is the spice of life.

P5-6 L4-5: Once reason has placed its tyrant’s grip over desire, desire starves and becomes weaker and weaker till it is only a shadow of itself and almost crippled. To Blake and the Romantics this would be classed as a tragedy although formerly such action may have been seen as a victory over evil.

P5-6 L15-17: The interpretation of the Devil here is open it could mean the Romantics, Milton or Job’s Satan, I believe Blake was more inclined at this point to mean the Milton Devil. What the Devil stands for here is Energy , Reason being only strong enough to restrain weak desires but it also means that Reason cause a split and division causing the two great opposing forces Good and Evil. Again Blake is poking fun at Enlightened thought declaring it created an evil, the division that on one side demeans the human soul and on the other it raises it to something divine.

P5-6 L18-20: Reason is a perfectly acceptable thing to have but with out Desire one does not know how to use it. .

P5-6 L20-22: Jehovah is another name for God. When Blake talks about him dwelling in the flaming fire it could mean one or both of two things: One, that the real God is Blake's Devil or two, that the flaming fire is Energy and that is where God lives and not in the stillness of Reason.

Memorable Fancy Blake referring to the 'fires of hell', be talking about human experiences of emotion and desire. He is enjoying how these are harnessed and augmented by 'Genius' the bohemian type of life style, the life complete with both Reason and Energy.

P6-7 L8: Another humorous juxtaposition 'the abyss of the five senses,' Blake is poking fun at the 'Angels' and talking again about how the senses which link the soul and body together are found in the realm of Energy not Reason. One cannot really reason out the senses,.

The Proverbs of Hell take up the discourse of four plates. They could be seen as a satire of Old Testament. Blake displays the ideals and idioms of Romanticism as he sees it

P7 L3: Blake assumes supposedly that the wise will learn from mistakes or too much excess of something, however only by having that excess, say of drinking and then getting a hangover, do they find their way to wisdom. Christian doctrine has been to resist all temptation and therefore be called wise.

P7 L4: Prudence is a thing of 'reason' and incapacity is what becomes of desire manacled by reason. Prudence personified as a 'rich ugly old maid' means that she is a person who has squandered her life, her chance of

happiness through using her riches and not answering the calls of love and so being left a virgin also meaning unmarried.

P7 L6: A worm when cut just grows the missing member back, this proverb runs on the lines of Nietzsche's what doesn't kill me makes me stronger.

P8 L1-2: Prisons are where one pays the price for one's wrongdoings to the state. A brothel is where one sells one's body and Church is where one sells one's soul. Also we have prisons because we have laws and prisons are a symbol of punishment here. We have brothels, Blake says, because we have religion which makes sex wrong or sex before marriage wrong.

P8 L6: Don't be ashamed of God's work. Woman was made beautiful and shame of her form is foolish and possibly Blake might be saying with a twist of irony that it is also irreligious.

. P8 12: Joys impregnate the soul and human experience. Sorrows bring forth from the soul possibly its endurance or those happy memories to relieve some of the pain.

P8 L21: The cistern can only contain water which may stagnate therein a fountain is constantly jetting out water; another allegory of the opposition between Reason and Energy.

P8 L22: Unclear in meaning but this could be taken to mean that the mind or soul takes up no space or all of space and so one thought may do the same.

P9 L10: When water is 'standing' it means it is still and not moving and keeping fresh it becomes stagnant and dangerous to drink. If something is

kept rigidly to a certain form that form becomes stagnant. Latin is a language which has become stagnant as it no longer is used and no longer develops. Societies can stagnate through the strict enforcement of custom like This might be an allusion to religion especially Christianity which Blake might have seen as out of date at that time. In fact Christianity was seen as out of date so much by the end of the next century Friederich Nietzsche declared that ' God was dead' meaning no longer useful in society which had developed him out of existence.

P10 L7: Beauty comes not from stillness, form and order but from exuberance which is defined in my dictionary as: ' superabundance, excess, copiousness, profusion, luxuriance, lavishness.' It is lavish and in high spirits like arguably nature is.

P10 L14: Blake thinks that nature with out man is barren, again trying to join to forces together man and nature. Also can be seen as a complaint to how far man has populated the earth that he can only be found where nature is barren, like deserts.

P14 L10-11: This blessed fire or destruction will begin with an improvement of sensual enjoyment of the energies. These energies will most presumably grow and become flame, it is energy and excess of it that will strip the rotten and corrupt and make everything holy, the energy will transcend from Hell to heaven and unite the two.

P14 L12-13: Before this marriage of two opposing forces can happen on the large scale, that which separates them must be united by the populous on

the small scale. The mind and body must be united the fallacy of their dual existence must be expunged. This is the only way forward.

Basically Marriage of Heaven and Hell is a satirical work which expresses many of the ideas of Romanticism. Here Blake is both insightful and ironic. Blake believes that humans are not naturally good they are born with the potential for both 'good and evil'. This poem is like making an omelet, Blake is whisking ingredients together which have been separated and ordered by the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment is also known as 'The Age of Reason' which is what it basically was, reason was the top of fashion, one was overcoming desire and emotions, which Blake calls energies, and governing themselves with reason. Blake says that one needs opposites to exist together for a complete human experience or life. Emotion has to come into the mix we are human after all, but in Romantic we try to putting things back together again and mixing everything up, a key word to remember with Romanticism is 'unity' unity in the arts and human life. You see how Blake doing that with his ideas about opposites, emotions and that Heaven and Hell are getting married and fusing together