

”batter my heart three
person god” by
donne’s holy essay
sample



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Donne's Holy Sonnet XIV "Batter My Heart Three Personed God" is his earnest plea to his Creator, the Three In One God, The Holy Trinity, Father Son and Holy Spirit, to deliver him from the clutches of evil Satan and ensure his eternal salvation. Donne uses a remarkable simile-"like an usurpt town"-to describe his pitiable sinful condition of slavery to sin and how his conscience and reason have been completely overwhelmed by Satan and hence cannot set him free. The only way he can be saved is, the Triune God should "batter"-smash through-the gates of the captive town, his heart and release him from the clutches of Satan and save his soul. He wants God to completely smash him into smithereens and then rebuild his life anew all over again. In the sestet Donne uses the metaphor of "betrothal" to indicate that he is enslaved to Satan and that only if God divorces him and "breaks that knot again" he will be really free.

The three concluding paradoxes-"imprison," "enhrall" and "ravish"-forcefully emphasize the idea that only if God imprisons and enslaves and ravishes him, he will become free and pure and holy once again. The diction and the rhythm of the poem is harsh to underscore the initial process of demolishing the old man before the new man is created. The alliterative phrase "break, blow, burn" jarringly reminds the readers of this destructive tendency. More significantly, "break" and "knock" symbolise the raw brutality of God the Father; "blow" and "breathe" symbolise the fiery Holy Spirit; and "burn" and "shine" symbolise the dazzling quality of Jesus the Son of God.