

NOT MARBLE, NOT THE GILDED MONUMENTS (SONNET 55)

Poem at a Glance

Marble and gilded (gold-plated) monuments are built by the princes and rulers to perpetuate their memory.

With the passage of time these monuments, memorials and statues lie neglected and ravaged by the immoral and evil practices of the people living in different times.

However, the memory of the poet's friend and patron will not be affected by the ravages of time.

The word of this poem will outlive all those monuments memorials or status.

Wasteful and unnecessary wars will demolish all memorials, monument or status erected by princes and rulers.

Tumults and conflicts will destroy and ruin huge buildings and monuments made of stones.

Even the mighty sword of Mars, the God of war and the quick fire of war will not touch and affect this 'powerful rhyme'.

This sonnet will remain as a living record of the memory of his friend and patron.

Neither death nor enmity shall obscure or fade away the memory of the poet's friend and patron.

The praise of the poet's friend will find a permanent place in the eyes and hearts of the coming generations through this poem.

The memory of his friend will last till the doomsday or the day on which the last Judgment will occur.

The poet's friend and patron will live in the eyes of all the lovers till the day of judgment in the form of this poem and its word.

LITERARY DEVICES IN THE POEM

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|-----|---------------------|---|
| (i) | Alliteration | : Shall shine more bright in these contents |
| | | : When wasteful war shall statues overturn |

- (ii) **Allusion** : Mars as god of war.
- (iii) **Symbols** : Sluttish time
: Posterity
: Doom
: Judgment
- (iv) **Sonnet** : it is a poem of 14 Lines with a structured rhyme scheme in which a thought about a subject is developed thoroughly. 'Not Marble, Nor the Gilded Monuments' is a sonnet.
- (v) **Rhyme scheme** : abab, cdcd, efef, gg.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS (30-40 Words)

- What does the poet compare poetry with? What does he say about poetry?**
Ans. The poet compares poetry with stone, statues and ornate monument. The poet says that his poetry will outlive stone- statues and gold-plated monuments of princes.
- What does the poet say about his friend?**
Ans. The poet sings praises of his friend in his poetry and says that the image of his friend portrayed in his poem will shine more brightly than the gold-plated monuments.
- What is the effect of wars on monuments? What remains unaffected by wars?**
Ans. Wars overturn stone statues and destroy the buildings and monuments. Poetry remains unaffected by wars.
- How does the poet want to immortalize his friend?**
Ans. The poet has sung praises of his friend in his poetry. Wars and the forces of nature will not be able to demolish his poetry in which he has sung praises of his friend. Thus his friend will be remembered by the future generations. Poetry as an art is permanent and therefore poetry will immortalize him.
- Why did the rich and powerful people get their monuments erected?**
Ans. They got their monuments erected so that they could be remembered till posterity.
- What does 'living record' refer to in the line 'the living record of your memory'?**
Ans. The 'living record' refers to their sonnet that the poet has written to sing praises for his friend.
- Describe the tone of the poet in this sonnet?**
Ans. In this sonnet, the poet praises his friend. He says that the image of his friend portrayed in his sonnet will shine more brightly than the ornate monuments. So his tone is admiring in the poem.
- How does the poet prove that poetry as an art is eternal?**
Ans. The poet says that wars and the forces of nature cannot destroy his poetry in which he has sung praises of his friend. His poetry will be read by coming generations and would immortalize his friends.

VALUE-BASED QUESTIONS (100 Words)

- The poet in his sonnet 'Not Marble.....' compared poetry with gold-plated monuments. Discuss the statement with reference to the extract given below.**
'Not marble, nor the gilded monuments

of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme.'

Ans. 'Not Marble, Nor the Gilded Monuments' is a very meaningful poem. It conveys that ornate monuments and the statues of princes cannot outlive poetry. In other words, poetry is an art and therefore it is eternal. It outlives the gold-plated monuments. It is possible that wars and the forces of nature may damage and destroy the gold-plated monuments and statues. But they cannot demolish his poetry it will continue to shine for all times.

The poet sings praises of his friend. He records memory of his dear friend in his poetry. He hopes that it will live till posterity. The praises of his friend that he has sung in his verses will pass on to the next generation. In the concluding lines, the poet asserts that poetry is an art. Therefore, it is permanent. It will immortalize his friend, the 'Earl of Southampton.'

The title of the sonnet is very suggestive. It brings out a vivid contrast between the everlasting power of poetry and the transitory nature of gold-plated monuments and beautiful statues of princes.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS(Reference to Context)

Read the extracts and answer the following questions by choosing the most appropriate option:

(1)

'Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme.'
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.

(i) The princes got their monuments erected in order to.....

- (a)** Show off their wealth
- (b)** Display their power
- (c)** Show their artistic talent
- (d)** Be remembered till posterity.

(ii) What will outlive gilded monuments of Princes?

- (a)** Fame
- (b)** Wealth
- (c)** Power
- (d)** Shakespeare's poem

(iii) What does 'you' refer to in the third line?

- (a)** Time
- (b)** Princes
- (c)** The poet's friend
- (d)** Monuments

ANSWERS

(i) (d) (ii) (d) (iii) (c)

(2)

When wasteful was shall statues over-turn,
 And broils root out the work of masonry,
 Nor mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
 The living record of your memory.

- (i) **Which poetic device is used in the first line?**
 (a) Alliteration
 (b) Metaphor
 (c) Simile
 (d) Onomatopoeia
- (ii) **Which poetic device is used in the third line?**
 (a) Symbol
 (b) Metaphor
 (c) Personification
 (d) Image
- (iii) **In the last line, the 'living record' refers to**
 (a) The sonnet the poet has written for his friend
 (b) An existing statue of his friend
 (c) His friend who lives in the poet's memory
 (d) The autobiography of the poet's friend.

ANSWERS: (i) (a) (ii) (b) (iii) (a)

EXTRACT BASED COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Read the following extracts and answer the given question:

'Gainst death and all oblivious enmity
 Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
 Even in the eyes of all posterity
 That wear this world out to the ending doom.

- (i) **How long will the poet's friend live?**
 (ii) **What poetic device is used in the fourth line?**
 (iii) **What does the 'ending doom' mean here?**

Answers

- (i) The poet's friend will live till posterity.
 (ii) It is alliteration
 (iii) It means doomsday.

(3)

When wasteful was shall statues overturn,
 And broils root out the work of masonry.
 Nor Mars his sword nor War's quick fire shall burn
 The living record of your memory.

- (i) **What attributes of war are referred to here?**
 (ii) **What cannot harm the memory of the poet's friend?**
 (iii) **Who are these lines addressed to?**

Answers

- (i) War is referred to as a greater destroyer of great statues and buildings designed by architects.
 (ii) Swords, weapons of war cannot bring harm to the memory of the poet's friend.

- (iii) These lines are addressed by the poet to his friend and patron- Earl of Southampton.

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