

BA (Eng-H)-I; Paper-II; Unit-1; Topic
"Shakespeare's Sonnet-73", Lec-series-45;
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Sonnet - 73: William Shakespeare.

"Sonnet 73" is a beautiful composition of Shakespeare which compares life with the Cosmos. It was first published in 1609. The poem explores the phenomenon of time and the aging. The popularity of the poem lies in the representation of life with time when compared with the whole universe.

As the poem is about the age of life, the poet tells his friend that he needs him the most in his old age when the spring of his life is going to fade away. The speaker illustrates that he has less time to live through vivid imageries such as "winter bough", "twilight's afterglow" and "fire's dying". These imageries reflect that he is heading towards his impending death. Therefore, he imagines himself on death bed, calling for the love and sympathy of his friend. He sums up the purpose of the revelation of his decreasing powers in the closing couplet, where he requests his friend to love him more when he is on the verge of death. The poem contains an important message that the power

of true love can help us to pass the trials of our lives happily.

→ Major themes: The poem comprises two major themes: love and death. The natural imagery used in the poem develops the idea that death is unavoidable. Leading towards the end of life, the speaker ~~portrays~~ portrays the cycle of life and immortal nature of human beings. Considering man's mortality, he explores the theme of love that will stand despite old age. In fact, he wants his love to understand the transience of life. To him, death will separate them. Therefore they should make the most of what time has offered them.

The poem is modelled on Elizabethan or Shakespearean Sonnet which comprises of three Quatrain followed by a couplet with the rhyming pattern abab cdcd efef gg. The meter employed in this sonnet is Iambic Pentameter, a meter that consists five strong metrical feet or beats with stressed and unstressed syllables. Shakespeare has also used some literary devices in this poem to discuss

The phenomenon of aging and time.
These literary devices are such as:

Alliteration; imagery; symbolism,
Consonance; Personification, Metaphor
Metonymy etc.

The closer glimpses of literary
analysis reveals that Shakespeare
has skillfully projected his
ideas about old age and love
under the cover of these literary
devices.

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