

A Hymn to God the Father by John Donne

John Donne is considered one of the most original and poet of the 17th century. He is also known as leading founder of Metaphysical School of Poetry along with other Metaphysical poets. A Metaphysical poetry is a poetry that deals with the elements of reality in relation to physical science. The poetry of this age is harsh and real with the mixture of concrete and hard images that are also called metaphysical conceits.

The present poem *A Hymn to God the Father* contains a speaker's prayers to God that he be forgiven for all of the terrible sins he committed. The poem begins with the speaker describing how the world is filled with sin. He might be not responsible for all of humanity's troubles but he has more than enough of his own to account for. The speaker tells of how he spends most of his life in sin. He runs through it, enjoying almost every moment spent there. This is all part of a confession and the plea to God. The speaker hopes that God will look down on him fondly and take away all the guilt he feels about his life. If God were to do so, and make the speaker feel as if Jesus is with all

the time, then he could live a happy life. He needs God to resolve all of his troubles.

In the first stanza, the speaker begins by asking god an important question. He needs to know whether God is going to be able to forgive the sins of the world. These are the things for which all of humanity suffers but which he was not a part of. The speaker makes sure to add on that they were done before he was born but unfortunately, because he is on earth, he is a part of it. The speaker makes sure that god knows his run through sin is not done because he wants to be a sinner. He deplores his own actions but is unable to stop. The last two lines of each stanza are mostly the same. Here he tells God that when he finishes helping and forgiving sins there will be more to do. His sins, and those of the world, go on indefinitely.

The second stanza answers the question of the first stanza and ends with the revelation that the speaker has forced others into sin. It is unclear what kind of sin he means but it was made their door for them to walk through. Making it easier for them to go against God than it had been previously. The speaker states that he did not mean to do harm anyone's life by leading them to sin, and the he liked to be forgiven, and making himself seem like an okay person, he can't help admitting the length he went to in order to enjoy his own sins. He tells God how

he wallow'd in the sin for a score. This vastly overshadows the merge
year or two he spent shun[ing] his sin.

The stanza concludes with the same two-line refrain informing God that he is not finished forgiving sins yet. There are still many more to come.

The final stanza tells god one of the speaker's most prominent sins. It is that of fear. Specially, he is afraid that he is going to be die before all of his sins are forgiven. There are so numerous that he may perish on the shore before God gets to them all. The reference to the shore is an important one. He does not end up in even or hell but in the space between: limbo. This is the worst-case scenario in his mind.

In the next lines the speaker asks God if Jesus, his son will be able to shine on him now as he has done heretofore, or up until now. Jesus' presence is a symbol of God's complete forgiveness. It would allow the speaker to take in some of his shine and stop sinning. The final lines are a bit different to those of the previous two refrains. This time the stanza ends with the speaker stating that he does not fear anymore. With Jesus there to reassure and improve him, his sins are no longer increasing and he is forgiven.

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