

RESEARCH ARTICLE**“Batter my heart”: A Supplication for Divine Absolution****Dr. Challagani Sindhu¹**

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Article Received: 03/11/2024; Article Accepted: 05/12/2024; Published Online: 07/12/2024**Abstract:**

“Batter My Heart” is a metaphysical poem that focuses on Christian morality, religion, and love. It's an expressive and pleading tone. The expression "Three Person'd God" refers to Christianity's conception of God as three distinct entities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In this particular instance, the speaker is speaking to the entire trinity and pleading with it to strike his heart. It delves into issues of religious struggle and redemption. It represents physical and artistic violence against which the poet's persona defines his relationship with God and investigates his spiritual awareness. In this poem, the speaker depicts the heart as being mute and imprisoned in a cage, unable to communicate or open up.

Keywords: Christian, emotional, trinity, desire, heart, God, dead, disobey, spiritual.

John Donne (1572–1631)

He was an English poet, preacher, and theologian, renowned as the central figure of the Metaphysical poets. His work, deeply intellectual and emotionally charged, explored complex themes of love, death, faith, and existence. Born into a Catholic family during England's religious turmoil, Donne initially pursued law but eventually turned to poetry, becoming famous for his witty and philosophical verse. His early poetry, often sensual and daring, was followed by a profound spiritual transformation that led him to the Anglican ministry, where he served as Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

Donne's metaphysical poetry is defined by its use of conceits or elaborate metaphors, which link seemingly unrelated ideas through intellectual reasoning. In poems like "The Flea," he uses a tiny flea to explore themes of love and physical intimacy. His poem "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" compares the separation of lovers to the movement of a compass, a striking metaphysical metaphor.

His poetry is marked by a combination of emotional intensity and logical thought, blending colloquial language with sophisticated imagery. Donne's ability to intertwine the sacred and the profane, along with his masterful use of paradox and wit, makes him a seminal figure in English literature, influencing both poetry and theology for generations.

In “Batter My Heart: Three Person'd God," the author sees God from a different perspective.

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The phrase 'batter' refers to repeated blows. The number three denotes completeness, wholeness, resurrection, and harmony in the Bible. The three beings—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—represent the holy trinity. Words and phrases that are repeated three times in scripture are frequently noteworthy and hold spiritual significance. Here, God the Father represents Jehovah, God the Son represents Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Spirit represents the Patron. The Father created everything; the Son offered his life for man, who soiled all creation. The Holy Spirit guides the believer who surrenders to God and submits to His word. Readers witness the writer expressing his grief to the Holy Spirit, who guides him to the Father, who made him, and to the Son, who died for him.

In this poem, the author prays to the three-person God—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—to heal his sinful heart. The poet begins by reflecting on his relationship with God, revealing how he has gone into sin and fallen away from grace. He expresses a strong desire for God to help him recover from his fallen situation.

The writer is praying with a three-person god to knock his heart, breathe his life into him, shine upon him, and bend him like a potter bends a pot to his preferred shape. The author uses the biblical passage, "Whoever hears my voice and opens the door, I will enter into his house" (Rev: 3:20) in this passage. God stands at the door of the heart and knocks. Whoever hears God's voice and opens the door of the house of the heart and invites God in will have all the filth and hypocrisy in their heart or soul cleansed away. Let anybody with an ear hear what the soul is expressing to the congregation. Jesus gazed at Mary Magdalene and addressed her as 'mother'; his words penetrated her heart, and the sin of adultery went away. The author reminds us that whoever obeys God's voice and accepts His call will have every wicked spirit removed from their hearts.

God breathed life into the man's nostrils, and he became a living thing. The poet is pleading with God that he has sinned and is spiritually dead. The poet understands that although the body is transient, the soul endures forever. The body works against the soul, while the soul works against the body. The writer is pleading with God to pour out His living breath upon his soul, realizing that he died away in a state of sin. The breath of God revives the soul of man and brings salvation to it. As the body is comprised of dust, it becomes dust, and the spirit returns to God.

So, the author recognizes that the soul is more essential than the body and begs God to purify it. When a person's soul establishes a relationship with God, his body is set free from sin. The author's objective is that when the vital spirit enters a man's soul, the man shines in the spirit.

The poet begs God to bend and shape him into a new person. Potter selects high-quality soft clay to build the pot, which is then hammered to soften it and eliminate all dirt, stone, and debris. Then, he lays it on the wheel and bends it in various ways to create his preferred image. If it breaks on the wheel, he will repair it and put it back on the wheel. The writer's purpose is that God is similar to Potter. As the Potter fixes the shattered vessel in his hand without discarding it, the writer pleads with God to mend him in the same manner that God, the Potter, will heal the man who has fallen into

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sin and not abandon him in abhorrence.

The poet admits that God is the only one who can raise him from the dead in faith and grant him the ability to bear fruit once more in the spirit. He is, therefore, pleading with God to uplift him from the muck of sin into which he has fallen. The poet recalls the promise, "Whoever abides in me, I will abide in him, and in whom I abide, he will be more fruitful." (John:15:5)

Gold transforms into a flawless jewel after being hammered and fired. In this sense, via some sufferings, tragedies, and penalties, man also transforms into a new person. The writer compares himself to an occupied city; God created man in His own image, and man's soul is the lamp of Jehovah. The author acknowledges that every human being is created in God's image and that the spirit in man is something God has given him. The writer claims that Satan has possessed both his body and spirit, which were implanted by God. To be possessed by Satan means to fill the heart with acts that are hostile to God. The writer's heart is filled with acts of flesh sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft; anger, contempt, jealousy; outbursts of fury, selfish ambition, dissensions, divisions, and envy; intoxication, orgies, and the like. Because God's spirit does not bathe in the writer's heart, all of God's opposite works are filled in. God has abandoned the city of his heart. The writer informs us that Satan, God's enemy, has infiltrated the city of his heart. When the arch was in the hands of the Israelites, they were triumphant, but when it was in the hands of the enemies, the enemies won. Similarly, the way of the person whose heart is full of God's commands becomes regular, whereas the way of the person who disobeys God's commandments becomes irregular. The writer's life exemplifies the biblical proverb that friendship with the world is enmity with God.

When a king invades a town, he naturally plunders all of its valuables. In order to solidify his authority in that country, he began persecuting his people. If the people of the occupied town submitted to the king's control, whether they liked it or not, death would be the penalty if they turned back. The soul opposes the body, while the body opposes the soul. The body represents Satan's activities; God's adversary, Satan, exploits man's fleshly cravings as sharp weapons to extend his lineage. He crushes people with his self-centeredness about what to eat, drink, and dress. Man's spiritual demise is brought about by fleshly desire, which causes him to disregard heavenly power and pursue his sensual desires. He becomes like a city full of fleshly hopes.

The poem focuses on God's love, religion, and morals from a Christian perspective. It has an emotive, appealing tone. John Donne realizes that God's love is superior to all else. The poet understands that God's love repairs fallen cities (lives) and that forgiveness is found in his love. Worldly attractions, joys, and comforts divide man from God's love, and those temporal delights produce mental or physiological blindness in order to see and experience God's love. Man goes into sin and does not turn to God until the sin he commits disgusts him. He does not remember God's love until the sin disgusts him. The biblical story of the prodigal Son is ideal for this context. A father provides loving care for his two sons. But his younger Son fights with him and rejects his love and affection. The younger Son takes his Father's property part and travels abroad. He spends his money on harlots, drinking, and other vices, becoming corrupt in every manner. He left empty-handed after using everything he had. While working as a pig caretaker, he finds himself without food, so he tries

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to stuff food or pig husks into his stomach. Then he recalls his Father's home and affection, his position of respect in his Father's home, and his plenty in his Father's house. Then he repented for having abandoned his Father's house and befriended the world with its hopes. I have sinned against my God and my Father, and I have mentally apologized to God the Father. A heartfelt apology brings him back to his Father's house. While on his way back to his Father's house, his Father noticed him and hurried towards him, taking pity on him. With that, the prodigal Son repented to his Father for sinning against him and God. The Father immediately pardoned him and summoned his servants, ordering them to bathe his Son, dress him in fresh clothing, and keep the gold ring on his fingers. Furthermore, he called the servants and instructed them to make a magnificent feast for his Son, who is lost and found, which implies that he has fallen into the world and returned to God because he died and came alive.

In this story, the author gets close to the missing younger Son or compares him to a man who has strayed from God. Father is identical to God Jesus. Even though people have turned away from God and toward the world at times, even if we have disobeyed God's words and commands, even if we have neglected God's love and sacrifice, when we repent and pray that my Father will raise me up from the depths of sin, he is the God who forgives us and brings us together. The writer understands this; he paid to rescue him from this wicked and sticky fast sand and stealing mud and lift him up to make him right.

Here, the writer is saying God, "I am trying to let you back into my heart, but I can't. "Spiritually, I am no longer weak, impotent, and becoming unfaithful to you. I lost control over my ideas, feelings, and decisions. Despite my desire not to, I turn against you. My soul battles against my body, and my body fights against the soul. I struggle at difficult circumstances.

Despite the fact that my soul works against You (God), I adore You and desire to be loved by You. Naturally, there are two types of mentalities attacking man, which we refer to as the positive spirit and the negative spirit. In spiritual language, we refer to them as the divine spirit and the wicked spirit. Regardless of how virtuous a man is, he will succumb to Satan's temptations. And sometimes disobey God. Even in this fallen state, we are cautioned by the spirit of God, who travels with us on our life's journey. Man lacks the ability to extricate himself from those specific conditions of alienation from God. He thus weakens. Even while the spirit of God is at work in man, the memory of sin is deeply ingrained and draws him further away from God in humiliation. The poet prays to God to purify, restore, and fix him. "Free me from the memories of sin and its consequences." The writer is currently in such a situation and begs God to deliver him.

Man is created in the image of God. When Adam broke God's command, God's image and nature were lost in his heart. John Donne characterizes the situation in which one disobeys God, i.e., eats the fruit that God has forbidden him from eating, transgresses his mandate, and listens to Satan, as associating with Satan, God's enemy. Many wicked deeds result from that marriage. The writer expresses dissatisfaction with his marriage and prays to God for a divorce. It illustrates how man's carnal nature of intellect influences his senses and welcomes the devil, the enemy of God, into his heart, alienating him from God. It explains how he was exhausted from living in that marriage and turned to God for relief from it.

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Until you attract me back, I cannot be attracted. Only if I am attracted to you will I be able to abandon my old ways and turn to you. Liberation from labor brings freedom. Man becomes free after he is liberated from slavery. Man's liberation from sin leads to omniscience. The poet wishes for God to captivate his mind. He believes that God's charm frees him from sin and sets him free. The writer believes that worship sanctifies him since his freedom transforms him into a great worshipper of God.

Conclusion:

Man cannot recognize his sin until he has arrived at the end of his journey. Man recognizes that all of his efforts under the sun have been in vain as he reflects on his early years, adolescence, adulthood, and final stages of life. The author of this poem is shown throughout his life as a slave to sin, pleading with God to free him from his captivity. His repentance will set him free from sin, draw him nearer to God, and transform him into the perfect worshiper of God. People in today's society, like the poet, turn to God and pray for salvation from sin after loving the world, experiencing everything, and struggling with sin, wasting their age, strength, intelligence, beauty, and knowledge.

As the body is mortal and the spirit is eternally aligned, man turns to God in his final moments and prays for deliverance. When Jesus Christ was crucified, two thieves were crucified with him. The second thief recognized his life's journey had come to an end and begged God for forgiveness, saying, "Father, remember me when you go into your kingdom." (Luke: 23.42) Then Jesus Christ pardoned him and promised him that he would see him in Paradise today. The author informs us that if we repent and turn to God even in our final moments, He will forgive and protect us. This poem reminds us to make the most of our opportunity without wasting time.

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