






2.4 The Pulley

Warming Up!

1. Go through the following images and try to link them with our lives. For example, Storm – Hardships that we face in our life.

	Sorrowful moments
	Determination
	Strength
	Life
	Honour
	Hope
	Wisdom
	Beauty



2. You may have often indulged in talking to yourself audibly.

For example,

- “Oh, dear ! Why didn’t I get up sooner?”
- “Let me finish this quickly and then I’ll be free”.
- “How silly of me! Why didn’t I think of it before?”

Such expressions are called Dramatic Monologues.

Imagine and write Monologues suitable in the following situations.

- It’s your birthday next week.

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- You have been waiting long at the city bus stop.

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- Your final exam results are to be declared tomorrow.

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- Your mother has been chatting for very long on the telephone.

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3. ‘The Pulley’ is a mechanical device.

Try and write down places where it can be used, and for what purpose.

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The Pulley

George Herbert (1593-1633) was a Welsh poet. He was a priest by profession. He wrote religious poems with a lot of imagery and conceits. The poem exhibits a strange but two way relationship between God and his worshippers. Though He has showered/bestowed upon His worshipper with all His blessings, somewhere He holds them up with a pulley drawn, to be grateful to Him in all their endeavours.

God gives so many precious gifts to the devotee but at the same time God also expects something in return! What does He expect? Why does He withhold?

“The Pulley” shows how God lifts man towards Himself with the pulley of restlessness. What is distinctly metaphysical about the poem is that a religious notion is conveyed through a secular scientific image.

When God at first made Man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by;
Let us (said He) “pour on him all we can:”
Let the worlds **riches**, which **dispersed** lie,
Contract into a **span**.

So strength first made a way;
Then beauty flow’d, then wisdom, honour, pleasure:
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that alone of all His treasures
Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should (said He)
Bestow this **jewel** also on my creature,
He would **adore** my gifts instead of me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature.
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with **repining restlessness**:
Let him be rich and **weary**, that at last,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May **toss** him to my breast.

– George Herbert

- **riches** : wealth bounties
- **dispersed** : scattered
- **contract** : collect together
- **span** : small space
- **perceiving** : noticing, becoming conscious of
- **bestow on** : give as a gift to
- **jewel** : precious valuable thing, (here) contentment (rest)
- **adore** : love very much
- **repining restlessness** : continuous anxiety due to dissatisfaction
- **weary** : very tired
- **toss** : (here) bring, throw close

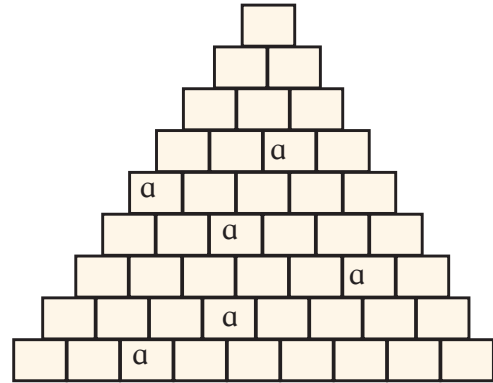
◆ *What did God’s glass of blessings contain?*

◆ *What would the human being do if God gifted him with ‘Rest’?*



1. With the help of the clues, pick out words containing the letter 'a' from the poem and build a word-pyramid.

- (a) an article
- (b) a preposition
- (c) past tense of 'lie'
- (d) maximum length of your open palm
- (e) make much of
- (f) loveliness
- (g) in place of
- (h) a collection of priceless valuables
- (i) restlessness and discontent



2. Choose the correct alternative from the following.

- (a) Herbert's poem 'The Pulley' displays as the two main themes.
 - (i) Origin of Morality/Spirituality
 - (ii) Origin of species
 - (iii) Origin of the universe/galaxy
 - (iv) Origin of the earth/space
- (b) The theme of the poem 'The Pulley' is
(Find two correct statements from the given alternatives.)
 - (i) to focus on the mechanical operation of a pulley.
 - (ii) to teach a lesson to a creation (man) by the Creator (God)
 - (iii) to know the different gifts bestowed on man by God.
 - (iv) to remind man about his creator in his exhaustion.
 - (v) God pulled man towards Him by making him restless and weary.
- (c) In the poem, 'The Pulley' is considered
 - (i) a mechanical device.
 - (ii) a gift to mankind
 - (iii) an image to lift objects.
 - (iv) an image by which God compels people to become devout.
- (d) is an example of Pun from the poem.
 - (i) Rest in the bottom lay.
 - (ii) So strength first made a way.

- (iii) Having a glass of blessings
- (iv) So both should losers be
- (e) is an example of Paradox from the poem.
 - (i) And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature
 - (ii) He would adore my gifts instead of me
 - (iii) Let him be rich and weary
 - (iv) When God at first made man
- (f) is an example of Synecdoche from the poem.
 - (i) So both should losers be
 - (ii) Then beauty flowed
 - (iii) “Let us” said he “pour on him”
 - (iv) May toss him to my breast
- (g) is an example of Alliteration from the poem.
 - (i) Made a way
 - (ii) Bottom lay
 - (iii) Repining restlessness
 - (iv) Keep the rest
- (h) is an example of Inversion from the poem.
 - (i) Contract into a span
 - (ii) So both should losers be
 - (iii) Bestow this jewel
 - (iv) And rest in nature
- (i) The rhyme scheme of the poem is
 - (i) a a b b c.
 - (ii) a b c b c.
 - (iii) a b c c b.
 - (iv) a b a b a.

3. Discuss and answer in your own words, and write in your notebook.

- (a) The poet has used the word REST thrice in the poem. Write what the word implies in each of the three lines it occurs.
- (b) What does God want in return from man, for the gifts He has bestowed upon him?
- (c) Why did God withhold the gift of ‘Rest’ from man?
- (d) Besides those given in the poem, what other gifts has God blessed mankind with above his other creations? Enlist them.



(c) When does man generally turn to God? Give one example to support your response.

4. (A) Discuss with your group and justify the title of the poem 'The Pulley' in your own words.

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(B) Pick out 3 lines that contain Monologues of God.

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5. (A) Pick out two lines that contain the following figures of speech.

- (a) Antithesis 1.
2.
- (b) Alliteration 1.
2.
- (c) Inversion 1.
2.

(B) Explain the Figures of Speech in the following lines.

(a) Rest in the bottom lay – PUN because

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(b) Bestow this jewel also on my creature – METAPHOR because

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(c) And rest in nature, not the God of Nature – REPETITION because

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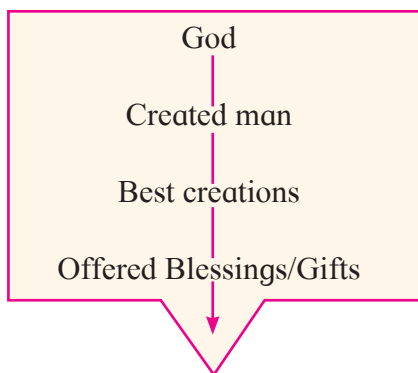
6. Write Critical Appreciation of the poem in a paragraph format.
(Refer to page no. 5)

7. 'Pun' can be defined as play on words based on their different meanings.
Example : 'Writing with a broken pencil is pointless.' In this poem there is an example of Pun. Find and make a sentence of your own. Share a joke with the class where the use of 'Pun' creates humour.



8. Write a paragraph on the points in each block given below to get a summary on each of the four stanzas of the poem.

I



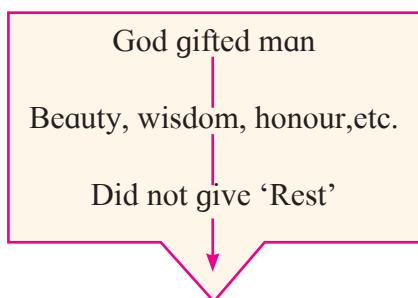
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II

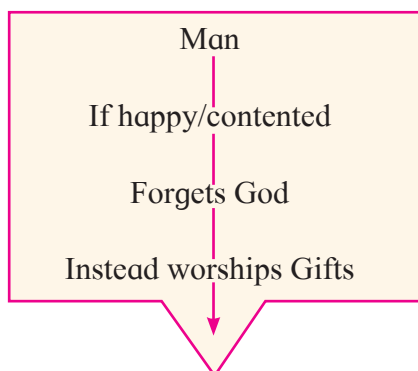


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III



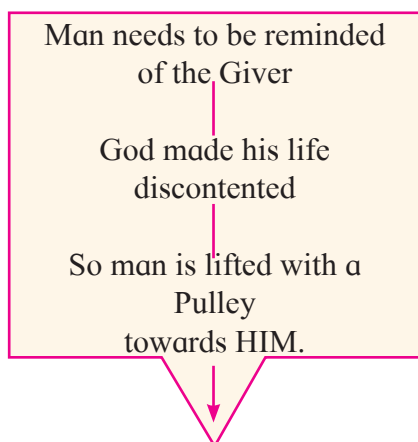
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IV



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