
Chapter 04 (Poem)

Childhood

The speaker pondered deeply upon the spiritual questions of life and ultimately realized the fact that his childhood days were finally gone down into the past of eternity for good and would never return. Childhood would now only remain in his memories. He wondered if the end of childhood was the day he ceased to be eleven years old.

The time when he realized that Heaven and earth could not be found in Geography and never could be. Where did his childhood go? Was it the time he realized that adults were not all they seemed to be? They talked of love and they preached of love, but did not act so lovingly nor practiced what they preached. Was that the day.

Where did his childhood go? Was it when he found out that his mind was really his? To use it whichever way he chose? To produce thoughts that was not those of other people but his and his alone. Was that the day? Where did his childhood go? It went to some forgotten place that is hidden in a baby's face. That was all that he knew and that was all that he remembered.

The poet feels that heaven and hell are not real places because they could not be located in geography. In the poem 'Childhood', the poet is trying to realise the age when he lost his childhood, when he became mature enough to understand the worldly things. So he keeps saying, "when did my childhood go?" He finally realises that his childhood is gone to "some forgotten place", "that is hidden in an infant's face."

"Wordsworth in his poem, My Heart Leaps Up, said, "Child is the father of the man". Markus Natten in his poem 'Childhood' has tried to explain this thought. It is child who is noble and pure in her/his thoughts and heart. A child appreciates the nature's beauty and the innocence in the world. A child is the one who teaches a mature human to selflessly appreciate simple love and natural wonders.

