

Chapter 10

Let Me Not to the Marriage of True

Solutions of Questions on Page No 110:

Question 1:

The following two common words are used in a different sense in the poem. Guess what they mean

bark	compass
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Answer:

Bark: Ship

Compass: Time range

Question 1:

'Constancy' is the theme of the poem. Indicate the words, phrases and images that suggest the theme.

Answer:

Constancy is not just the theme of the poem but also it is the most important thing in any and every relationship. In the poem, there are many such phrases that express this quality. A few of the expressions are listed below.

1. Love is not love which alters
2. Love is not love which bends

3. It is an ever-fixed mark

4. Never shaken

5. Love's not time's fool

Question 2:

Why do you think the poet has used so many 'negatives' to make his statement?

Answer:

"Marriage of True Minds" is the Shakespearean idea of love. The poet goes on explaining what love is not. All that love shall not comprise. Rather than singing in praise of the qualities that true love possesses, Shakespeare goes on listing all that loves should be free of. Or rather, to say, the negatives that do not go in the making of true love that lasts forever and is ageless. It is opposite to what is usually said about love. Shakespeare approaches the whole idea of love the other way round. He says that love is not that imposes restrictions; it does not change in response to changes. Love is not that dies with the departure of a lover. It is to live forever. In the third quatrain also, Shakespeare tells the reader the love sans negatives. He declares that love is not time dependent or is altered by the physical beauty. Physical beauty withers as the time goes by but love grows in leaps and bounds. It is not impressionable, it is not affected by the time. It surpasses death. It all sounds unnatural, however, this is the Shakespearean idea of love.

Question 3:

What does the line 'I never write, nor no man ever loved' imply?

Answer:

Shakespeare, in his poem Let Me not to the Marriage of True minds, approaches the idea of love or ideal love, the other way round. Throughout the poem, he talks and explains all the negatives that an ideal love must not comprise. Similarly, the poet maintains his tone in the end of the poem as well. He closes the poem with the couplet 'I never writ, nor no man ever loved'. In an unnatural or inverse fashion,

rather than saying that men have loved and so he writes, Shakespeare says that if what he has written is to be an error, then he would not have written it all and that no man would have loved at all. Confidently, he challenges anyone to prove his idea of love to be wrong; he knows that it is impossible and that his knowledge stands true.

Question 4:

Love is presented as the subject or the doer of actions in the poem. Why do you think the poet has used this form rather than involving human agents?

Answer:

It is not surprising that Shakespeare has chosen love as the subject and has not involved human agents. The reason for his choice is obvious and it the underlying theme of the poem, the fickle nature of humans. However, the love, and eternal being, is constant. Hence, the poet when talked of all the qualities that love embodies and should be sans of, he chose love itself and not a human, whose emotions and sentiments undergo frequent changes. Shakespeare should be appreciated for his understanding of human nature and thus a wise decision made by him in his composition.

Question 5:

Explain the phrases.

- a. his bending sickle's compass**
- b. Time's fool**

Answer:

(a)

Compass is considered as a symbol of eternity. However, in the poem, it represents the change that a relationship goes through as it grows, old and less intense. How a man's love for his young beloved grows less as he gave value to beauty over the spiritual love. Though the love never dies, the physical beauty of a lover may fade and withers as it falls to

time's compass' sickle.

(b)

Shakespeare says that love is not at the mercy of time. True love is ageless. No matter how old a human grows, with it love grows; though the physical beauty falls prey to time's sickle. It is the constancy that holds two people in a relationship together.