

Blake: Songs of Innocence and Experience

William Blake wrote a series of poems that are compiled into a work known as the Songs of Innocence and Experience. Being of the romantics, Blake makes use of words in a very irregular way for the time. This irregularity can be seen in the contrast of two of his more known plays from the compilation, “The Lamb” and “The Tyger.”

“The Lamb” is a poem from Blake’s Songs of Innocence. This poem is written in perspective of a child, or an innocent body, and is gently asking a lamb who made thee. Blake makes a point to add repeating lines to be very sing-song as a child would use. The child isn’t the only way that this song embodies the ideas of innocence; the lamb itself does that as well. The child mentions all the innocent things about the lamb such as its bright soft wool or its ‘tender voice.’ The child goes on to make the point that whoever made this sweet and peaceful lamb must be an equally good. The child is saying that God who created the child himself and the lamb is a God of good and a reflection of themselves.

Much of a contrast to this vision is “The Tyger.” Instantly the voice is saying that a tiger is not like a lamb that is bright and soft but burns bright. The voice is clearly an older voice easily being experienced. The words are more complex and create greater metaphor. This voice, unlike the child, is fearful of what God might look like. If God could create a beast so scary and dangerous what possibly could God be like? Why would he make something like this? Blake adds, “Did he who made the lamb make thee?” This question not only clearly nods to the previous poem but also makes the narrator seem even more concerned about the intentions of the creator. This person has experienced life and seen that it is not just soft fur but has dark inside of it.