



Mother's Love for her Children as Depicted in Literature, with Particular Emphasis on the two Poems "Night of the Scorpion" and "Home they Brought her Warrior Dead."

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ABSTRACT

Love is a universal subject in literature. Since the Elizabethan Age, writers have been writing dramas, poems, novels, and short stories. In India, many epic writers produced masterpieces on the subject. Love has different dimensions. Many movies have been produced and dramas enacted, highlighting the greatness of love. But Mother's love towards her children is unique. It is selfless, unrivaled, and pure. It cannot be bought or exchanged for anything else. It lasts forever, facing all obstacles in the journey of life. Whether the mother is young or old, rich or poor, near or far, it does not matter. She showers love and affection on her children. She starves herself to feed them. She never blames or accuses them of any cause. She only forgives them and loves them. As soon as she gives birth, the mother takes on many responsibilities for her children. She is the first best friend, first teacher, mentor, guide, caretaker, and a special person. She fulfills her job of motherhood with a pure heart and complete devotion. Although, many pieces are written, it is only possible to discuss some of them. So, two poems have been selected in which two mothers show their love for their children on two occasions.

Keywords: love – universal subject, different angles - mother's love- great and wonderful - children's responsibility.

Introduction :

Mother - the word itself is great unmatched, adorable, and wonderful. The mother is the creator of the human population. Though the father and the mother are equally responsible for a child's birth, the mother plays a vital role in the process. She bears the child for more than nine months in her womb. During this time, she faces many health problems and physical constraints. However, she never feels the burden.

Moreover, she enjoys the child's movements in her womb. Ultimately she gives birth to a child after struggling a lot. It is commented that a mother faces rebirth when delivering a baby. Nevertheless, she forgets everything and hugs the baby in abundant happiness and love. Since then, she always shows

affection and love to the baby until death. She shows the same attitude towards the subsequent children. How do a mother's love influence children? The answer is given by Marion e. Gareth, in a beautiful way, "Mother's love is the fuel that enables a normal human being to do the impossible."

Since the Upanishad Age, the place of the mother has been praised. A Sanskrit Sloka says "Mathrudevo Bhava, Pitru devo Bhava, Acharyadevo Bhava...." It explains that be one for whom the mother is God, be one for whom the father is God, and be one for whom the teacher is God. It advocates the message that one should treat Mother as God. Though others like the Father and the Teacher should also be treated as gods, the sloka stresses giving first preference to the mother. Why should the mother be given such importance? Because without her, one has no existence.

Mahek Daleh, in his article "Literary Mum: unforgettable Mothers from the world of fiction" says "if there is one thing in this world we can all unanimously agree on, I believe it is this-the years we spent with our mothers are unforgettable" it is true because every person admits that the childhood days spent with mother are always memorable. In Indian as well as foreign literature and in ancient and modern literature mothers are depicted as noble, loving and caring. However, some mothers are also shown as selfish, unkind and even cruel.

In the Mahabharata, one of the greatest epics of India. Kunti gave birth to a son before her marriage with the blessings and boon of Lord Surya, the sun god. Fearing that it was a sin and unethical act she abandoned him. She kept the baby in a box and left it on the river waters hoping that he might survive by chance. Though she got children after her marriage she always thought about that first son. Later, she came to know that her first son named Karna became a great warrior. Her happiness knew no bounds. He met him, showed love and requested him to come and stay with her. Despite his denial, she showed affection on him.

In another epic, 'Ramayana' Kaikeyi, Lord Rama's step-mother was shown as selfish mother. Her love for Rama surpasses her affection for her son Bharatha. So she demanded her husband, King Dasaratha, to give the Kingdom to her son and send Rama to the forest for 14 years. Here her selfishness was seen in exhibiting her utmost love for her son.

In fiction as well as biographies and autobiographies compassionate, caring and loving mothers are found. an incident occurred in the life of Thomas Alva Edison a famous inventor in the world, may be recollected. He was expelled from school by the teacher because of his mental illness but his mother hid not reveal this to him. She, being herself a teacher, taught, trained and motivated him to become an inventor. After his mother died Edison on found the truth and wrote in his diary. Thus "Thomas Alva Edison was an abled child that, by a hero mother, became the genius of the century.

Everyone has praised the importance of mothers, including commoners, educated people, poets, and rulers. The goddesses Matha Annapurneswari, Jagan matha, and Seethamma Talli are indeed referred to as mothers in India. In numerous works of literature worldwide, different authors have extensively discussed the concept of Mother's greatness. A lyricist for a film in a regional language says, "The sweetest word that lips utter is mother" Not only this, various writers have expressed this idea in dialogues and songs. Many films have picturized a mother's love for her children and her family. A mother's love cannot be measured or bought for money.

Agatha Christie says, "A mother's love for her children is like nothing else in the world. It knows no law, no pity. It dares all things and crushes down remorselessly all that stands in its path". It is a great explanation and expression. An essential feature of a mother's love is that she does not expect anything in return. She loves without any selfishness. Though she is disrespected, blamed, or cursed by her children, she never gets angry. She sacrifices everything for them. If she is poor, she feeds her children with what she has and hides her hunger before them. She feels that if she can feed them, that is enough for her. It is also believed that God has created mother because he cannot be present everywhere.

Debasish Mrida has said, "A mother's love is more beautiful than any fresh flower." It is true because the beauty of a fresh flower withers in a day or two. However, a mother's love is eternal, as her love starts as soon as she knows about her pregnancy. She experiences bliss on one side and tensions

on the other. Despite this, she neglects them, bears them, and faces them courageously for the sake of her child. When alone, she talks to the fetus, imagines its replies, and feels happy. Whatever pain she bears, she treats it as sweet pain. She shares her blood with the fetus. When the baby is born, she forgets all pain she has experienced during pregnancy and at the time of delivery. As the baby grows, she concentrates on it. Although she is not a good singer, she sings lullabies to make the baby sleep. While feeding the baby, she calls the moon in the sky to come and give many presents to her dear one.

A woman's love towards her children though significant is not restricted. She also loves her family. As a daughter, she loves her parents, and as she grows, she loves siblings. As a wife, she showers abundant love to her husband. As a housewife, she loves her in-laws. As a citizen, she loves society. However, her love for her children has no bounds. It cannot be described. It can only be felt. As that love is ultimate and most valuable, it has become a subject matter for poets and other writers.

The positive aspects of a mother's love towards children can be seen in the story where King Solomon finds out about the actual mother. The widely read story goes like this- one day, two women come to the king along with a baby. Both of them claim that the baby is theirs. The king thinks for some time and decides to conduct a test to find the truth. He gives a sword to the soldier and asks him to cut the baby into two parts and give the women one part each. Suddenly, one of the women prays to the king not to cut the baby and instead asks him to give it to the other woman, who remains silent. Immediately the king orders that the baby is given to the actual mother, who prays not to cut the baby because he knows that a mother never thinks of causing any harm to her child. She longs for the safety of the child, wherever it lives.

In several poems, mothers' attitudes toward their kids are also depicted. Dale Salwak makes a strong case for his description of literary mothers. He effectively states, "Literary mothers, whether good or bad, are memorable characters. Bad ones become cautionary tales of the depths that humans can sink: good ones become emblematic of the love we all yearn for".

In all forms of literature, mothers are portrayed as angels, sharing love and kindness. But in some pieces of drama, novels, short stories, and others, certain characters are regarded as cruel, selfish, and harsh. Good and bad things are indeed found everywhere. In Shakespeare's 'Hamlet,' Prince Hamlet terms his mother as a woman of frailty. From his point of view, it is justified because she marries her husband's brother after the death of her husband.

In the article "Motherhood in Literature," Dale Salwak says that mothers are often naive, incompetent even silly in the literature that followed classical literature. He cites the example of Mrs. Bennet in Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice," who is more concerned with social status and prosperity than with her daughter's struggles with the constraints of outdated conventions.

In Tolstoy's novel, Anna Karenina leaves her children away and goes with her lover. But in literature, many mothers' love and devotion towards their children and family are exemplified. Mrs. Bennet, though mean-minded, strongly wishes that her five daughters be married to wealthy persons to lead a good life in society.

Main Body

Almost in all countries and all languages, various writers have described mothers' love in different forms of literature. Each one of them has looked at it from a unique perspective. But ultimately, all have expressed their opinion that the mother's love towards children is tremendous. It is only possible to discuss some of them in one article. So, two poems by two poets - one from India and the other from England - have been taken for the present study. The two poems describe a mother's love for children from two distinct angles.

The first poem, "Night of the Scorpion," is written by an Indian writer, Nissim Ezekiel. On the outer surface, the poem appears ordinary; the narrator recollects an incident. On a rainy night, his mother suffers a scorpion sting. She loses consciousness. The news spreads within no time across the village. Men and women from nearby and far-off houses gather around her with lanterns and candles.

They try to lessen her pain. Some people wish the scorpion would not move because once it does, the poison in her body spreads throughout the rest of her body. Some pray to God to save her. Her husband soothes the wound with paraffin. However, all their efforts are ineffective and futile.

After ten hours of suffering and struggle, the woman opens her eyes. She looks around and finds her children safe. Immediately she says, "Thank God; the Scorpion has picked on me and spared my children." The women and the men are astonished. They expect a word of gratitude from her. They have traveled there to assist, aid, and accompany her. Some of them skip their meal, while others lack sufficient sleep. It is a common scene in rural areas. Almost all the villagers get together to show solidarity, support, and sympathy to any miserable and suffering villager. Here also, the villagers risk the heavy rain and come there to help her. Their expectation of gratitude from her is natural. One can find irony here. The woman neglects and ignores all the villagers who have served, helped, and prayed for her. Instead of thanking them, the woman thanks God for sparing her children from the scorpion's bite. Moreover, one can notice a mother's love for her children. A mother prioritizes the protection and well-being of her children above everything else, including her safety.

While everybody else is concerned about the mother's critical condition, she only worries about her children showing a typical, self-sacrificing maternal love. The poet has skillfully focused on Motherly love and has received considerable notice in Indian literature. The mother's response is bland and simple. (www.litgalaxy2019.com).

In the second poem, "Home They Brought her Warrior Dead," the poet Alfred Lord Tennyson describes a pathetic situation at a soldier's house. The soldier sacrifices his life on the battlefield for his country. His body is brought to his house for funeral rites. As soon as people know about it, they flock to pay their respects to the departed soul and console his wife. They are surprised to see that the soldier's wife is standstill. She sits by her husband. She sheds no tears because she is in a mood of shock. Perhaps she is not prepared to accept the truth. Her neighbors fear that she will also die if she does not weep. So, they try all sorts of attempts to make her weep. Some praise her husband as a courageous warrior whom the country would remember. Some others call him a great friend and a noble enemy. Another person goes to the dead body and removes the cloth that covers his face, but the woman's reaction remains unchanged. Finally, an elderly nurse brings the soldier's child and places it on the mother's knees.

Then, suppressing her grief and agony, the woman bursts into tears. She says that she would live for her child. All the villagers heave a sigh of relief. They know that there is no danger to her life because she understands the reality and realizes that she has to take responsibility for her child. Her love for the child surpasses the grief caused by her husband's death.

These two poems describe a mother's love from two different perspectives. In both the poems, the physical sufferers are mothers. However, in "The Night of The Scorpion," the mother directly suffers because of the scorpion's bite. In the second poem, the victim is the woman's husband because he is dead. Indeed, he leaves immense sorrow and suffering on his wife. She has to bear that agony throughout her life. She decides to get solace from her child. So, she promises him that she will live for him. In the first poem, the mother feels happy not for the scorpion's bite but for sparing her children. In the second poem, the mother, with a heavy heart, decides to take care of her child in her husband's absence. She knows that she has to lead a miserable life without her husband. Nevertheless, in one way, she feels happy because she has a child, and her responsibility is to bring him up. The mother in them surpasses their suffering and shows love for their children—this is paramount to every mother. Both mothers' affection for their kids is indescribably precious. It cannot be put into words; it can only be felt.

However, the miserable situation nowadays is that children fail to reciprocate their mothers' love. They leave them to their fate. Some of them admit their mothers in old age homes. They ignore all the services rendered by their mothers. It is not kind. Karl Lagerfeld says, "The only love I believe in is a mother's love for her children." Every child should remember this.

Conclusion:

Mothers have mental power and emotional strength. They perceive everything, whether good or bad, carefully. They accept any miserable situations courageously and strive to solve them. Mothers need support in their old age. Generally, a wife outlives her husband. So, she must depend on her children. The responsibility of looking after a mother lies on the son, not the daughter. A daughter gets married to a person in another family and goes away with him. So, sons should take care of their mothers. It is not enough to greet their mothers on Mother's Day and give them a present at times. It is necessary to live with her in their houses. It is binding on them to allow their mothers to play with their children.

Every son should keep in mind Thomas Carlyle's words. He says "Who is that loves me and will love me forever with an affection which no chance, no misery, no crime of mind can do away? It is you, my mother."

A son must make her mother live a peaceful and happy old age life to prove himself to be a responsible and worthy son. Even if he does not do any of these things, his mother never feels sorry. She makes incredible sacrifices for her kids and their families. Youngsters can never truly express their gratitude to their mothers. In fact, they should always respect and adore them. Even after her son's marriage, a mother craves his well-being more than his wife does. According to an old regional saying, a mother observes her son's stomach after he returns from work while his wife looks at his pocket. A mother always thinks about whether his son takes sufficient food at an allotted time or skips it. A wife always thinks about whether her husband earns a lot or not. The difference between a mother's love and a wife's love lies here.

Nevertheless, at the fag end of her life, the mother is not treated well and is wholly neglected. It is clearly depicted in a cartoon. A young man is found leaving his mother at the gate of an old age home. Her heart is filled with grief and sorrow. However, she hides it. Even then, she longs for the safety and well-being of her son. When he is ready to leave, she advises him to go home carefully and slowly on his two-wheeler. That is the greatness of the mother. It is a perfect example of a mother's love for children. No love on earth can beat, match, or compete with it. That is unique. It is the responsibility of all children to reciprocate their mother's love for them. They should take care of their mothers, especially in their old age.

The prominence of mother is clearly illustrated in a post. The teacher asks sixth class students to write an essay about their mothers in 200 words and in 30 minutes. One girl writes just one sentence, in one minute and gets full marks the one sentence is "Any combination of 26 Alphabets can never explain my Mother". If all children can develop and exhibit this attitude, then their mothers live happily and die happily. This paper may be summed up with an observation "Sacrifice thy name is mother."

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