

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

SS 2

WEEK 6

NON-AFRICAN POETRY: "The Journey of the Magi" (setting, themes and structure)

SETTING

As the title suggests, most of the poem is set during the "journey of the magi". As the biblical stories goes, this was a journey made shortly after the birth of Christ. In the second stanza, the magi draw close to their destination, presumably Bethlehem. Still, this doesn't turn the journey into an enjoyable experience; the setting, though it becomes a beautiful "temperate valley", is still full of unfriendly and unhelpful people. The setting of the poem is in the Middle East, around Palestine and precisely the road on which the wise men – the Magi travelled as they went to their destination to visit the newborn baby, whom we assume is Jesus. It was written in 1927.

THEMES/MORAL LESSON

1. The quest for salvation (life is a journey).
2. The birth of the messiah.
3. We should reposition our minds to ensure trials and difficulties of life.
4. Determination and perseverance in life.
5. Challenges and temptations associated with salvation.
6. Suffering and endurance.
7. Hope and disappointment (regret).
8. The battles of life and death.

STRUCTURE

"The Journey of the Magi" is a three-stanza poem, each one representing a different stage of the journey. It is separated into sets of lines that vary in length. The first stanza contains twenty lines, narrates the most difficult aspect of the voyage and the challenges of spiritual growth of rebirth. The second stanza contains eleven lines, continues on with the journey as the Magi reach their destination. The third stanza contains twelve lines, return to their place, remembrance of the journey and wish to embark on the journey again.

HOME WORK

1. Give detailed explanations of any **FIVE** themes in "The Journey of the Magi".
2. Explain the structure of the poem, "The Journey of the Magi".
3. Give a brief account of the settings in "The Journey of the Magi".