

RESEARCH ARTICLE



INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA
2395-2636 (Print); 2321-3108 (online)

HOW FAR DOES A CHRISTMAS CAROL OF DICKENS CORROBORATE THE MESSAGE OF SALVATION OF HUMANITY AND ESTABLISH THE GIFT OF “RESURRECTION OF SOUL”?

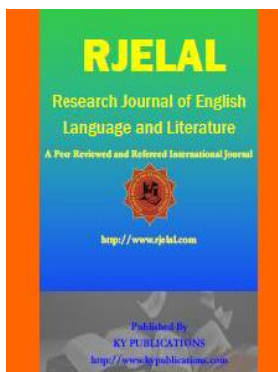
SHANTANU SIULI

Ph.D Research Scholar
Seacom Skills University
Birbhum, West Bengal, India

ABSTRACT

The study of redemption in terms of Christianity is of high value and noteworthy. Dicken's A Christmas Carol is of the finest and to some extent is the greatest work of redemption. It is the play that is closely related to the action of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil. Ebenezer Scrooge, a more interesting character that has become synonymous with an angry mood and excessive thriftiness during the holiday season, is a man of redeeming qualities. With A Christmas Carol, Dickens tries to manipulate how self-serving, insensitive people can be converted into charitable, devoted and socially conscious members of society by quasi-religious lessons. More or less or by default Ebenezer Scrooge redeems his soul by becoming the antithesis of what he has been in his previous stage of life.

Key words: Christian Redemption, Thriftiness, Charitable, Religious, Antithesis, Gift of Resurrection.



©KY PUBLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Dickens began to write A Christmas Carol in the year Sep, 1843 with a very short span of time of six weeks and had published it on 19th December 1893. Throughout the story the concept of Christianity is skillfully woven into one another. Dickens' argument that Jacob Marley had no bowels is a close reference to the “bowels of compassion” notified in John I. Above all A Christmas Carol is a play of celebration and merriment on Christmas Eve and the fine specimen of the “Redemption” of one character. As we proceed into the text we found a mean –spirited, dubious old man Ebenezer Scrooge sits in his shop at one evening of Christmas Eve. His clerk, Bob Cratchit, trembles slightly in the anteroom due to his boss' refuses of spending money on heating coal for fire extinguishing. Meanwhile his

nephew, Fred came upon him to visit Ebenezer to invite his annual Christmas dinner party. In return he shows his earnest disgust by replying this way “What reason have you to be morose? You're rich enough.” Then two gentlemen came to Scrooge to demand a contribution to their charity. And for that case he also shows his utter disgust and anger too by saying “Bah! Humbug!”. After returning to his apartment at evening Ebenezer is visited by Marley's ghost and is informed that he would be visited by three spirits one on each successive evening. He also informed by Marley that he must be listen to these spirits and be cursed to carry chains of his own that were much longer than that of Marley's. As Marley goes away, Scrooge encounters other spirits who do wish to help other fellow men but they are futile to do so. Scrooge then by the certain period of time is

encountered with three spirits who do accompany him to various Christmas eves.

The first of the spirits, namely the Ghost of Christmas Past, ushers Ebenezer to the Christmas eve of his youth and boyhood moments that highly expose the tender, pleasant and the innocent side of his life vehemently. This moment symbolizes his lonely childhood age, his deepest concern and love for his beloved sister Fan and also his first employer who used to treat him as his son. These also portray Ebenezer's broken relationship with Belle too with whom he showed his less concern than that of earning money. Then he meets, after a short span of time, to the second spirit, the Ghost of Christmas Present who let Scrooge to visit the different scenes- a crowd market of people busy to buying Christmas dinner, a strong merriment and joyful laughing of Christmas eve in a miner's cottage and obviously in the light house and after then they visit to the Fred's Christmas party who is speaking of his uncle very politely. This moment really unnerves Scrooge's intellect and the most baffling thoughts when he visits Tiny Tim first the youngest son of Bob Cratchit who being seriously ill deserves a modest, pleasant and tender behavior during his family feast. Meanwhile the third spirit namely the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come to expose Scrooge few scenes involving the death of a wretched man. When Scrooge asks the Ghost to show anyone who pays sympathy and emotion over a man's death, the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows him an emotion of pleasure from a poor couple being indebted to a man are rejoicing that his death would give them more pleasure to pay off their debt. After Scrooge asks to see some tenderness related to death, the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows him Bob Cratchit and his family mourning the death of Tiny Tim. Then the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come shows Scrooge the man's neglected grave which bears Scrooge's name.

Next morning i.e. on the very pleasant Christmas morning Scrooge awakes with full of joy in his mind and spends the whole day with the family of Fred and also sends Christmas turkey gifts anonymously to Cratchit house at dinner. In this portion we find Scrooge a changed and enthusiastic

man of courage and tenderness; like a new born baby full of innocence and charming.

DISCUSSION

Though Christian themes are wholly interwoven throughout in Carol, it must be difficult to avoid the "notion of self damnation by one's slow salvation and realization". With Carol Dickens hopes to expose how a self serving, self-centered and most baffling people can be converted into a charitable, daring and pleasant character through the several damnation of sinful behaviors. Manifestation of self through several past experiences by each Ghost has projected Scrooge to get rid out of his damnation. Dickens Carol is highly corroborative in terms of the true sense of its meaning. Memory helps Scrooge to remind other people with which he was really connected before his self damnation. Empathy enables Scrooge to sympathize with and understand those having less fortunate than himself like Tiny Tim and Bob Cratchit and highlights the message of love and sympathy and devotion for one's own community. The world becomes a better place almost immediately following Scrooge's conversion. In fact, the story implies that a renewed connection to humanity is, in fact, the very essence of redemption. Though the Christmas setting invites a traditional Christian interpretation of Scrooge's redemption, his change is rooted not in a commitment to deeper spirituality or orthodoxy but in an authentic connection to and investment in the lives of other human beings. Overwhelmed with joy by the chance to save himself and grateful that at least he has been returned to Christmas day, Scrooge came out to the street to distribute his new found joy and salvation found out by Christmas spirits that has the power to resurrect one from the damnation of one's plightful moments. This represents nothing but his own salvation, but the salvation of Humanity, of World, of Disorder, of Functions and resources that have been flowing unconsciously to the unalterable knowledge of "damnation". Moreover, he then sends a giant and big Christmas turkey to the house of Cratchit and attends the party of his clerk, Mr. Fred's house at a very fine and pleasant evening. Then by the course of time he keeps his promises and decorates Christmas with all the pride of his heart till his death.

He values Tiny Tim and rears him as his own son, makes noble and valuable works for the poor and the wretched persons, provides gifts for them for their encouragement of every little work and looks after his fellowmen with utmost care and magnanimous behaviors. He is quite literally saved man and the story of his eternal redemption itself ends with the excessive note of optimism: a passion of rejuvenation to have the immortality; "Immortality of human soul." The famous last line of the Carol- "God bless us, Every one!" strongly implies that the reawakening is being done and perhaps it should be done by the blessing of God. It also indicates that the plightful and wretched circumstances of human being will be washed out if one listens the "Music of Salvation" of God's will to eradicate the turbulence of one's mind. Frailty is not the name of salvation that is absolutely proved by the bias of the natural characteristics of Dickens Carol. Carol means, in terms of the etymological sense of the word, a merriment, a refreshment of a certain time associated with the Christmas time that has been celebrated at the remembrance of Jesus Christ. It means a religious song of popular hymn related to Christmas. And with the help of the Dickensian hymn it must be noted that the true potentiality of human beings cannot be completed by the resources of materialistic power and pride, but it might be fulfilled with the decorum of inner thoughts on the resurrection of human souls. Carol is no doubt demanding and rewarding for having fulfilled its entire thoughts on "Procreation-PROCREATION OF NEW SOUL into ONESELF. Readers of modern period are no doubt satisfied with the note of redemption, too inspired they are.

CONCLUSION

Dickens' A Christmas Carol is entirely a bonding of allegorical ambiance with a stark note of ambition: ambition of high hopes and aspirations to have the touch of eternal salvation. With this Carol Dickens illuminates how a self centered, cruel hearted and finned like man is transformed into a charitable, pleasant and sympathetic man with the message of resurrection of God. Ebenezer Scrooge is not found a man of dependable, of magnitude at the beginning of the story and his slow transformation with the message of salvation is noteworthy with

the subtle touch of magnanimous behavior towards his fellowmen. Warmth, generosity overcomes his bitter moment and learns him to be faithful, truthful and loyal to the World of Humanity. Memory serves to remind Scrooge of a time when he still felt emotionally connected to other fellowmen, before his confinement of the state of alienation. Scrooge's ability to understand and share of feelings of another is the key words of this novel. Dickens no doubt establishes the theme and the focal point of his contemporary society with which he is assimilated himself. Empathy enables him (Scrooge) to sympathize with the people of less fortunate surrounded by him. With the message of each Ghost, Dickens incorporates the fundamental ideas of Christian love, generosity and magnanimity that skillfully heighten the social and religious bias of Victorian period. Besides this Carol also depicts a political ambiance that has been found in the delineation of Bob Cratchit's family problems. Scrooge's close connection, towards the end of the story, with Tiny Tim highlights the revelatory acceptance of Christmas ideals. He is gifted with the fruit of resurrection and with the aroma of this fruit his soul is cherished for the eternal moment of time. A Christmas Carol definitely corroborates the message of salvation with the cost of the redemption of soul and happily procreates the soul at the fullest form of resurrection under the blessing of God.

REFERENCES

- Andrews, Dale : Dickens' A Christmas Carol. Literary History. Washington: SleuthSayers.2011.
- Skelton, Stephen, A Christmas Carol : Special Church Edition(2007)
- Hutton, Ronald: Stations of the Sun: A History of the Ritual Year in Britain. Oxford University Press.p.113. 2011.
- Ledger, Sally: Dickens and the Popular Radical Imagination. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.(2007).
- From www.wikipedia.com.
- Rowell, Geoffrey, Dickens and the Construction of Christmas, History Today. Dec.1993.