



Janvi Nakum

Roll No.15

Presentation:1

Topic: Absalom and Achitophel

John Dryden

John Dryden was born in 9 August 1631, Aldwinckle, United Kingdom. John Dryden was an poet, literary critic, translator, and playwright who was appointed England's first poet laureate in 1668. He is seen as dominating the literary life of Restoration England to such a point that the period came to be known in literary circles as the age of Dryden. Died in 12 may 1700, London, United kingdom. Dryden the poet is best know today as a satirist, although he wrote only two great original Satires: Mac Flecknoe (1682) and The Medall (1682). His most famous poem, Absalom and Achitophel (1681) contains Several brilliant satiric portraits. But unlike satire, it comes to a final, tragic resolution.



Absalom and Achitophel Theme

John Dryden was brilliant Satirist in the Neo Classical period. His “Absalom and Achitophel” is regarded as not simply a satire, but a poem as Dryden himself calls it “a poem”. The Central theme :

- ❖ Temptation
- ❖ Sin
- ❖ Fall
- ❖ Punishment

Absalom and Achitophel Characters

Major Characters

- Absalom
 - Achitophel
 - David
 - Saul
 - David's Brother
 - Corah
 - Shimei
 - Zimri
 - The Pharaoh
- Ishbosheth
 - Jonas
 - Barzillai
 - Barzillai's Eldest Son
 - Jotham
 - Amiel

Minor Characters

- ❖ Balaam
- ❖ Caleb
- ❖ Nadab
- ❖ Zadock
- ❖ Sagan of Jerusalem
- ❖ Adriel
- ❖ Hushai
- ❖ Amnon
- ❖ Michal/ David's Wife
- ❖ Annable

Absalom

- David's illegitimate son and the protagonist of "Absalom and Achitophel".
- David's favorite child Absalom is handsome and ambitious, and he has made himself a hero at war.
- Absalom agrees to rebel against David, and as he travels Israel in a procession with Achitophel.
- David asserts his power as king before the people of Israel and effectively shuts down Absalom's rebellion, but Dryden never does say what becomes of Absalom.
- Though the character of Absalom, Dryden ultimately argues that Charles and his brother James both have a divine right to the crown that is not extended to Monmouth.
- Dryden argues through Absalom that Monmouth's play to power, specifically his attempt to seize a position of power that rightfully belongs to another, is a sin against God.
- Dryden doesn't entirely denounce Absalom's ambition, but he does argue that usurping the throne is completely unethical.

Achitophel

- A deceitful counselor to King David and the Antagonist of “Absalom and Achitophel” of all the men who oppose David within the Government, Achitophel is the most influential.
- Achitophel is smart, ambitious, and morally flexible.
- He pretends to be David’s friend, but completely destroy it. He encourages David’s son Absalom to rebel against him.
- Achitophel hates David’s Brother the heir presumptive and Achitophel beings his plan to ruin David by Claiming David is a Jebusite, and while he knows that his argument is “ weak”.
- However, Achitophel has mistaken David’s mercy and mild temper for signs of weakness, and when David finally loses his patience, Achitophel is reminded of David’s divine power.
- Dryden’s Achitophel member of Anthony Ashley Cooper, 1st Earl of Shaftsbury, a member Parliament during Dryden’s time.
- Achitophel main supporter of the Exclusion Bill.
- Though Achitophel, Dryden suggests that Charles and James both have just Claims to the throne and is not for Shaftesbury, Monmouth, or Parliament to infringe on that power.



Thank you

