

FIRE AND ICE

STUDY-NOTE

● The poem 'Fire & Ice' expresses the idea that the world would end in either of two ways, either by ice or by fire. Robert Frost presents two opposite views about the end of humanity and the world. He discusses these two possibilities which will be the reason for the end of the world.

● One such possibility is the world ending in flames of fire. It is so, because when he ponders over the burning flames of desires of people. These will definitely hurl the world into another nuclear war, and hence it will burn up the entire world in flames.

● The second possibility for the end of the world is due to the ice. Similarly, the poet also draws a comparison between ice and hatred, saying that hate is as cold as ice. When we expose ourselves to the ice for more extended periods, it causes numbness. Likewise, if there is too much hatred in us, it leads to our minds becoming numb. And, when our minds become numb, it makes us cruel and insensitive beings.

● When we become brutal and callous, we tend to destroy everything that there is around us without the slightest thought of remorse, which, in turn, will lead to our demise. If fire would lead to rapid destruction, ice would lead to silent damage.

● Similarly, if fire is pure passion, ice is pure reason. Thus, the poem, very artistically, underpins the philosophy that we let our emotions rule us and if we don't control them they will surely bring the world to a complete end.

LITERARY DEVICES

1. Rhyming scheme- aba abc bcb

2. Assonance- it is repetition of vowel sounds in same line. The repetition is at different places in different words. Example- The long sound of "o" in "I hold with those who favour fire"

3. Alliteration- alliteration is the repetition of a consonant sound at the start of two or more closely placed words. Example- The sound of "f" in "favour fire", "w" in "world will"

4. Imagery- Imagery is used to make readers perceive things involving their five senses. Example- “Some say the world will end in fire” , “To say that for destruction ice is also great”

5. Anaphora- the repetition of a word or expression at the start of two or more consecutive lines. Example - “Some say” is repeated at the start of lines 1 and 2.

7. Enjambment- it is defined as the thought or clause that does not come to an end at a line break, rather it moves over to the next line. Example- “From what I’ve tasted of desire I hold with those who favor fire”

