

“A Christmas Carol” Story Analysis

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“A Christmas Carol” is a story written by Charles Dickens in 1843. This story gained immense fame over the years, leading to many movie adaptations. A movie directed by Brian Desmond-Hurst, named *Scrooge*, is considered the closest in storytelling to the original literature (Desmond-Hurst, 1951). The tale follows the life of Ebenezer Scrooge, a rich miser with an obsession with doubling his money. His obsession is so great that he is unwilling to pay a living wage to his employee, Bob Cratchit. Near Christmas, Scrooge is seen looking down upon the Christmas festivities and is unwilling to donate to charity. Then, at night, he is woken up by a disturbance in the house and sees the ghost of Jacob Marley, his equally greedy ex-partner. Marley warns Scrooge about his current behaviour and advises him to change for the better, but Scrooge refuses. Then, throughout the night, he is visited by three ghosts, namely, Ghost of Christmas Past, Ghost of Christmas Present, and Ghost of Christmas Future. After witnessing his future, Scrooge is horrified and decides to change his ways. He then goes to his employee, Cratchit’s home, bearing gifts and apologizes for his behaviour. He changes and becomes a generous and thoughtful person (Dickens, 1812).

Christmas Culture

Before Dickens’ story, Christmas was not as festive as it became after the story. Dickens wrote this story in the Victorian Era, and during this time, many Christian leaders were sceptical of this holiday as they regarded it as a pagan tradition. Another reason for the lack of celebration was the lack of resources, which caused many families to be unable to afford to celebrate Christmas. Dickens’ book brought the right message of celebration regarding Christmas and painted the holiday as a charitable event where people became generous and helped the less fortunate. In the book, the Christmas spirit is presented in such a way that it fits the Christian perspective, and it became so popular that it is now considered a Christian holiday (Wood, 2013). This spirit was aptly captured in the 1951 movie adaption, where Scrooge became a generous man, brought gifts for Cratchit’s family, and joined in the festivities of Christmas. The movie was low-budget, but it was still able to capture the festivities of Christmas.

Christmas Celebration

As previously mentioned, Christmas was not as celebrated as it is today because not only was it seen as a pagan tradition, but people also did not have much time to spend on celebrations as they were busy trying to make ends meet. Many modern Christmas traditions are inspired by Dickens’ portrayal of Christmas. Through Scrooge’s change into a generous man, Dickens introduced the concept of exchanging gifts, grand feasts, and the overall merriment of the season. Dickens’s portrayal of

Christmas brought colour to this holiday and made it the most celebrated holiday of all time. In the 1951 movie adaptation, Scrooge's character is played by Alastair Sim, who does an exceptional job at portraying the character. Scrooge is seen carrying a sack of gifts to Cratchit's house towards the end of the movie and then joins the family for dinner. It is a humble celebration, but it truly captures the spirit of Christmas.

Similarities To Today's Celebrations

It was Dickens' work that shaped the Christmas that we celebrate today, so there are a lot of similarities in the traditions. *Ghost of Christmas Past* shows Scrooge numerous instances from his past, including one in which he is enjoying a grand Christmas party thrown by Fezzwig, a merchant. Scrooge used to work as an apprentice for this merchant. When *Ghost of Christmas Present* appears, he is surrounded by a lavish feast that includes mince pies, turkey, various desserts, etc. Modern Christmas feast also includes these dishes. Exchanging gifts is also a practice that was inspired by Dickens' view of Christmas as Scrooge takes a sack of gifts to Cratchit's home for his family. The sack full of gifts has now become a symbol for Santa Claus, who carries gifts for good kids. Scrooge is also seen giving donations, and at present, it has been recorded that donations increase during Christmas.

Missing Elements

The 1951 film was not heavily funded but captured the book's depiction so well that it is considered a gold standard compared to other adaptations of the book. The only difference that was seen was Sim's portrayal of the character other than that the movie is as close to the original as it could get.

Conclusion

The Christmas culture portrayed is a humble and straightforward celebration of the holiday. It is free from the commercialized form of Christmas that is celebrated today, and it captures the value of family in tough times as well. This story allows the readers to see the value of the family that one might spend time with during Christmas and the way family is everything. This sentiment is portrayed through the character Tiny Tim, who, despite being extremely sick, is just happy to spend time with his family. This story was written in six weeks, and initially, Dickens wrote it with the intention of bringing in money for his family as he was also struggling to make ends meet. However, his view changed as he continued writing this story, and he understood the importance of family. He funded the publication of this book and sold it at five shillings apiece; this made it affordable for everyone.

References

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