

SINNERS BEWARE

Sonnet 1

It is entirely overlooked by commentators that *Sonnet 1* — *the sonnet that introduces the poet's collection of the 154 poems of the Sonnets* — closely parallels *Psalm 1*, the corresponding introductory psalm that introduces the *Bible's* 150 psalms of praise to the Lord. (See both *Psalm 1* and *Sonnet 1* on page 3.)

It had not been lost on commentators that the theme of *Sonnet 1* repeats arguments made in a then well known “*Epistle*,” written by Renaissance humanist and theologian, Desiderius Erasmus, which attempted to “*persuade a young gentleman to marriage*.” The latter treatise applies the *Bible's* first commandment to man, “*be fruitful, and multiply*.”

Nevertheless, since commentators have generally assumed that Shakespeare was a staunch secularist, the thought has been neglected that the poet himself would have embraced the actual religious outlook of the *Epistle* and would have patterned his *Sonnet 1* to follow closely that of corresponding *Psalm 1*. Instead, commentators have tended to conjecture an external circumstance to explain the poet's motive for writing the sonnet (and the similarly themed 16 sonnets that follow). This the commentators have theorized was the result of Shakespeare's need to grace a powerful patron on whose behalf the poet wrote these poems to influence a particular young man that was being neglectful of his dynastic responsibilities.

The commentators, in so doing, failed to appreciate just how close is the sonnet's parallel to *Psalm 1*. This closeness is revealed in the details of the sonnet's presentation of the case against the young man for his dereliction of duty. The youth, described as endowed with uncommon natural gifts of beauty, is seen to be taking a sinful path of selfishness and gluttony in the neglect of his obligations. The sonnet makes apparent that the young man's ingrate behavior is leading him to violate the *Bible's*

commandment, “*be fruitful, and multiply,*” thereby placing him among the sinners — sinners whose “*way*” *Psalm 1* tells “*shall perish.*” This becomes apparent as summed up in the sonnet’s concluding admonition:

*Pitty the world, or else this glutton be,
To eate the worlds due, by the graue and thee.*

These lines openly declare that the “*way*” of the young man is destined to perish, his “*way*” to be buried with him “*by the graue*” as well as to be destroyed in his own person, in his “*thee.*” Thus, in the context of *Psalm 1*, unless the young man bethinks his “*ungodly way,*” selfishly disregarding the *Bible*’s first commandment to man, he and his “*way*” shall perish.

The problem this religious sentiment raises for commentators is how to regard it in relation to the rest of the sonnets. For it had long been assumed that these poems were essentially secular and even profane as reflected in the many sonnets that appear as love poems directed to a self-involved young man and to a licentious woman. This would actually make the religious affirmations of *Sonnet 1* contradictory to the profane content that follows — an oddity in an introductory sonnet. That *Sonnet 1* is indeed meant to be introductory is convincingly argued by scholar Helen Vendler. She had taken note of the sonnet’s extensive list of words that echo words and themes that are to be encountered in later sonnets. As Vendler wrote:

Words appearing here [*Sonnet 1*] which will take on special resonance in the sequence [of sonnets] are numerous: *fail; beauty, ripe, time, tender, heir; bear, memory, bright, eyes, feed, light, flame, self, substance, make, abundance, foe, sweet, cruel, world, fresh, ornament, spring, bud, bury content, waste, pity, eat, due, and grave.*

Judging from the many anticipations of what is to come in subsequent sonnets, Vendler concluded that *Sonnet 1* must have been written later than the others and, surely, was deliberately

PSALMS 1

1. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

2. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

3. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

4. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

5. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

SONNET 1

FRom fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauties Rose might neuer die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heire might beare his memory:
But thou contracted to thine owne bright eyes,
Feed'st thy lights **flame** with selfe substantiall **fewell**,
Making a **famine** where abundance lies,
Thy selfe thy foe, to thy sweet selfe too **cruell**:
Thou that art now the worlds **fresh** ornament,
And **only** **herauld** to the gaudy **spring**,
Within thine owne bud **buriest** thy content,
And tender chorde makst **wast** in niggarding:
Pitty the world, or else this **glutton** be,
To eate the worlds due, by the graue and **thee**.

composed as an introduction, to serve as what she calls a veritable “*index*” to the topics and themes to come.

Of course, the puzzling contradiction of religiously themed *Sonnet 1* to the others could be expected to be clarified by later sonnets, *that is*, unless the poet by then had abandoned such coherence in a revision of his thoughts — an indefiniteness not expected of a serious poet. Vendler, who takes at face value the poet’s profane expressions of love for what she believes are an actual man and woman, reads the *Sonnets* as declaring the poet’s unconventional approach to human passion. According to her, the poet had made this part of his own iconoclastic religion — a thought she alleges is found in *Sonnet 105*, in which the poet pleads in its first line, “*Let not my love be cal’d Idolatrie,...*”

To traditionalists, Vendler’s view is disappointing in the context of *Sonnet 1*’s strong expressions calling into question the sinful path of the young man’s neglect of the *Bible*’s commandment. (See the *Note* on page 10.) But this contradiction becomes even more acute as there are found in *Sonnet 1* unsuspected steganographic elements pointing to an even stronger conventional, religious commitment by the poet, fully opposite to the secularity and impiety that Vendler and other commentators have assumed. Is there a way to understand the piety of this first sonnet in relation to the alleged opposite tenor in the sonnets that follow?

To do so, the first, most relevant matter to be clarified is the true identity of the young man addressed by the poet. If the poet is not addressing someone like a patron’s delinquent, dynastic son, who then could he be addressing?

Inferring from the findings in later sonnets, we learn that the poet is addressing not an actual young man but an *allegorical personality* — a representation of all youth, including himself. The *youth*, it becomes later apparent, is one imaged at the very moment of glow brought on by an encounter with the heavenly spirit, *the higher soul*. Traditionally, the latter is the *aspect of the soul* that accounts for man’s *good incli-*

nation, his moral self. The **higher soul**, known in Hebrew as the **ne'sha'mah**, arrives at the age of moral maturity, as patterned in the *Bible's* account of the heavenly visitation to young Solomon (2CH 1:6-13). The Rabbis generalized this *angelic visitation* as befalling not only a king but also all *youth* of this age.

In this light, the sonnet's young man represents *everyman* — *both male and female*. It is *youth* emerging from the innocence of childhood, the age when *all youth* is deemed to possess the beautiful and glorious promise remarked on in *Sonnet 1*.

As we later infer, the consequence of the above angelic encounter has been so exhilarating that it has quite overcome *the terrestrial, lower inclination*, the appetites previously kindled by the *given-at-birth lower soul*.* Smitten, the *youth* strives to emulate the high angelic disposition encountered, forsaking the lower. The heavenly impact had evoked a love so dominating that now the *youth* is asleep to his earthly appetites and needs to be urged to take them on.

Not until *Sonnet 18* does the figure of *the higher soul* enter the sonnets, personified as a *lovely, idealized version of the youth*. Later sonnets bring further acquaintance with this representation. Eventually, they also bring acquaintance with its opposite number, *the youth's lower soul*, personified as "*the dark lady*." She appears as an irresistible *temptress*, enticing the embrace of the sleeping, lower terrestrial inclinations. It is within this allegorical matrix that the sonnets undertake explorations of the inner struggle to achieve a balance, in which both inclinations play essential parts. (See *Sonnet 144* in which these personifications are described as *angelic spirits and friends*.)

Sonnet 1 is the first of the opening, seventeen sonnets that explores the condition of an unbalanced life dominated by love of *the higher soul*, preferred by the youth because it is *pure, Godly*,

* These aspects are mentioned in the traditional *Jewish morning prayers* (*Artscroll p. 20*) — "*Let not the evil inclination dominate us.... Attach us to the good inclination ...*"

and is other than the passions of *the lower inclinations, the sullying love of the dark lady*.

But such an angelic, higher life, though it raises man above a bestial, rapacious level, is inadequate since it precludes aspects necessary for earthly, self preservation — aspects manifested by all living creatures. These aspects include the powerful appetites for food, the burning wrath enabling self-defense, and, of course, the irresistible attractions of love that make procreation possible. Thus, the young man, dominated by the higher soul, is defective, incomplete. He requires the influence of the *lower soul*, the attractions of the *dark lady*, to awaken his terrestrial inclinations, drawing him into a balance in which both higher and lower inclinations are brought into harmony.

It is this necessity for balance that the *holiness-aspiring* youth — the representation of the inner life of the poet at a youthful stage — is shown in later sonnets to experience, *often to his great anguish*. These sonnets will include direct addresses to each of the *two souls* and to God, *the Author of this great orchestration*, in which “*fulfilling His word ... [are] young men and young women.*” Also to be found are sonnets in appreciation of mentors that have lighted the poet’s way.

With this as the Heavenly context, let us now return to the exploration of *Sonnet 1*. Given its major introductory role, it should not be surprising to learn that this sonnet provides many indications of this context. Some of these show up in direct allusions to the *Deity* in devices transliterating the *Bible*’s four-letter, sacred name of God, *YHVH, YHWH*, as well as the shortened form in *Psalms, YaH*. Versions of these and others appear on sonnet lines 5 to 10 as follows:

But **thou** contracted to thine owne bright eyes, _5
Feed'st **thy** lights flame with selfe **sub**stantiall fewell,
Making a **famine** **wh**ere **ab**undance lies,
Thy selfe **thy** foe, to **thy** sweet selfe **to** cruell:
Thou **that** art now **the** worlds **fresh** ornament,
And **only** herauld to **the** gaudy **spring**, _10
Within thine owne **bud** buriest thy content,

Note the transliterated version of the sacred name as “**y-a-h-’uoh**” beginning with “**y**” of “**thy**” (line 6 above) and ending in “**h**” of “**thou**” (line 5). In this, “**u**” is read as “**v**” — *letters often interchanged in Elizabethan printing (e.g., “neuer,” “graue”)*. Two other versions of the name are “**yhwh**,” each set in “palindromic” fashion, *its parts read reflected, coming from opposite directions about an axis* as “**yh|wh**.” Both versions are begin with the letters “**yh**” of the third instance of “**thy**” on line 8 — one read up and one down. Also to be noted are the devices reading “**y-a-h**” — *lines 6 to 8; lines 8 to 7 to 8 (2 versions); lines 10 to 9*). In these, the repetitions add to their credibility.

Also to be read on the same lines are transliterated versions of another traditional name of God, **Ha’tov/Ha’tob**, (*the Beneficent*). One of these begins at “**thy**” (line 6), reading up as “**h[a]tt-ou**.” (In this and others, assumed vowels are added to consonants in the manner of written Hebrew.) Other versions appear as “**ha’tob**.” One reads down from letters “**ht**” of “**with**” on lines 6 to 7 as “**h[a]’t-ob**.” Others begin on line 9, one reading down from “**h**” of “**the**” as “**h[a]’t-o-b**”; a second reading up from “**fresh**” as “**h[a]-’to-e-b**.”

Another telltale device appears twice, transliterating the Hebrew name for *the higher soul*, “**ne’sha’mah**.” One reads “**ne-’s-h-o’-m-a-h**,” beginning on line 4 and running up from “**ne**” of “**tender**” to the letters above. The second version, “**n-e’sh-ow-’-m-ea-h**,” begins on line 7 from the “**n**” of “**abundance**,” extending up to end in the “**h**” of “**might**” on line 2. These are shown with directional arrows below:

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
 That thereby beauties *Rose* might neuer die,
 But as the rip**er** should by time decea**se**,
 His t**en**der heire might beare his m**e**memory:
 But thou contr**act**ed to thine ow**n**e bright eyes, _5
 Feed'st thy light**s** flame with h**is** selfe substantiall fewell,
 Making a famine where abou**nd**ance lies,

Also to be noted above is the divided device that presents the poet’s surname as “**sh[a]-e-c-s — per**.” This reads down from “**sh**” on line 3 and adds the adjacent letters “**per**” from the same line 3.

A similar divided version reads “*sh[a]-e-c-s — sp-er*” as seen on previous page 6. This reads up from “*fresh*” (line 9) and is completed by “*sp-er*,” which begins in “*spring*” on line 10.

The letter alignments of the devices discussed can be verified in the facsimile of the original quarto sonnet on page 16. The appearance of so many devices is surely beyond a normal range of accidents and indicates that these were intentionally arranged. They demonstrate the poet’s astonishing ability that enables him to compose a complex sonnet and, simultaneously, select its words while spacially visualizing their letters to create configurations running contrapuntal to the sonnet text to present subtexts commenting on the poem and suggesting its significance.

Apparently not content to rest on these steller demonstrations as sufficient to confirm the existence of the devices shown, the poet also took the opportunity to further enrich his devices through communications made possible by *Equal Letter Skip* (*ELS*) devices. (That the *Sonnets* have incorporated such devices has been shown by commentator John M. Rollett, who *convincingly* found some of these in the *Sonnets Dedication*.)

Of the *ELS* devices that appear in *Sonnet 1*, one spells God’s sacred name in the letters, “*y-h-u-h*” — the letter “u” again read as “*v*.” This is presented at a skip of 119 letters beginning on line 4 in “*y*” of “*memory*” and ending at line 14 in “*h*” of “*thee*.” See this marked in the sonnet on page 3. (There are 15 *ELS* devices in the sonnet reading “*y-a-h*,” albeit not altogether telltale owing to chance in the case of brief, three-letter strings.)

Another telltale *ELS* device phonetically transliterates God’s name as *Ha’tov*, significant since it also appeared in embeddings. This is presented in a lengthy, six-letter device at equal skips of 4 letters, reading *h-a-t-o-h-u* (the letters are shown bold and underlined on page 3). This begins with “*h*” of “*fresh*” (line 9) and ends with “u” (read “*v*”) of “*herauld*” (line 10).

Still other *ELS* devices present a few versions of the poet’s full name — given additional significance because of the repetitions. (*See some of these marked on page 3.*) While the

poet's lengthy surname does not emerge in a continuous *ELS* string, it does appear in divided parts as “*s-h-c-s — p-e-r*” and also as “*s-h-c/k — spr* and *s-P-r*.” The four-letters of the first version (*s-h-c-s*) is read at a *leftward* skip of 33 letters; its shorter portion (*p-e-r*) occurs six times at various skip counts (*a skip of 7 letters shown, page 3*). The second divided version, appearing in combinations as “*s-h-c* and *s-h-k—spr* and *s-P-r*,” yield seven occurrences with the string, *s-h-c* (*three using s-h-k, the latter at a -47 letter skip from “fresh,” shown on page 3*), and two occurrences of letter strings completing phonetic renderings of the poet's name, one with *spr* in “*spring*” and the other “*s-P r*” at 14 letter skips from “*wast*.” As to the poet's first name, its only *ELS* version occurs phonetically in a 20 letter skip as *w-y-l-l*. This is shown on page 3 beginning with “*wast*” (*line 12*) and ending with “*l*” of “*worlds*” (*line 14*).

The many devices in *Sonnet 1* — super-extraordinary if accounted to accident — confirm their authenticity as part of the design of the sonnet. What is more, that these devices present numerous instances of known Hebrew names of God as well as two instances of the Hebrew name of the *higher soul*, the *ne'sha'mah*, further alludes to the sonnet allegory. And since this sonnet is shown to be introductory to those that follow, it promises that those too will share its religious outlook in the manner parallel to *Psalms 1*'s relation to the rest of *Psalms*.

This assemblage must tell that the 154 poems of the *Sonnets* form a coherent whole — hardly the random, spontaneous collection that many commentators have supposed. Furthermore, the indications are that this “*whole*” brings the presentation of an overarching religious allegory.

These findings call into question the previous assumed secularity of the nature of the *Sonnets* by commentators and surely call for a corresponding change in our understanding of the poet that wrought this collection of poems.

CODA 1

As noted, the many devices found in *Sonnet 1* would appear to self-confirm their authenticity and to be supportive of their significance in shedding light on the meaning of the sonnet. The full meaning, however, must be developed in the context of later sonnets. For now, further exploration proves the validity of these assertions since the poet has embedded transliterations of the Hebrew words of the first verse of *Psalms 1*:

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

This is powerful proof that the poet meant his poem as a parallel to the corresponding first psalm of *Psalms* and, of course, strongly points to the fact that there is a religious interpretation to be sought for the *Sonnets*.

Below in Hebrew is the first verse of *Psalms 1* followed by a phonetic transliteration of its words. Transliterations of these words will be found color-coded in the sonnet shown on the next page and shown again extracted below that. While it is to be noted that transliterations are approximate in reproducing the sound of the original language, what is to be especially noted is the orderly presentation of the consonents of the words.

אֲשֶׁרֵי הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא הָלַךְ בְּעֵצַת רָשָׁעִים
וּבַדֶּרֶךְ חַטָּאִים לֹא עָמַד וּבְמוֹשָׁב לְצִים לֹא יָשָׁב

ash'rei ha'eesh a'sher lo ha'loch be'a'tzas re'sha'im,
u've'de'rech cha'ta'im lo a'mad, u've'mo'shav le'tzim lo ya'shav.

Note: It is significant that the Hebrew *name* of the sonnet's number, *one*, "*Alef*," has the meaning, "*to train*," "*to teach*." Vendler senses this sonnet function, noting the poet's literary strategy in which "*we are educated in [his] culture*," an "*education that continues throughout the sequence*." The importance of this to the poet is emphasized by the many phonetic devices around lines 6 and 7 transliterating the sonnet number — "*al[e]f*," "*all[e]f*," "*a-l[e]-f*" (2), "*al[e]-f*" — see these shown on page 3.

SONNET 1

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
 That thereby beauties *Rose* might neuer die,
 But *as* the riper should by time decrease,
 His tender heire might beare his memory:
 But thou contracted to thine owne bright eyes, __5
 Feed'st thy lights flame with selfe substantiall fewell,
 Making a famine where abundance lies,
 Thy selfe thy foe, to thy sweet selfe too cruell:
 Thou that art now the worlds fresh ornament,
 And only herauld to the gaudy spring, __10
 Within thine owne bud buriest thy content,
 And tender chorle makst wast in niggarding:
 Pitty the world, or else this gltton be,
 To eate the worlds due, by the graue and thee. __

And tender chorle makst wast in niggarding:
 Pitty the world, or else this glutton be,
 To eate the worlds due, by the graue and thee. __

l = line; ll = lines

as-h-R-a[e]-h (ll 3-1-3) *h[a]'e-e-sh* (ll 4-6) *as-h[e]-R* (ll 3-1)

*l-o h-o-'l-a-h*** (ll 4-8) *be-'e[a]'ts[a]-s* (ll 14-12-13)

r[e]'sho-'im (ll 3-4)

*re's-s[o]-'im** (ll 1-3);

*o[o]'u[e]-'de'r[e]-c-h** (ll 5-4-6) *c[a]-'t[a]h-'e-im*** (ll 1-3-2)

lo a'm-o-d (ll 12-13) *u-'b-e'm[o]-w'sh-ob* (ll 6-4-7)

l[ae]-'ts-e-am (ll 13-12) *lo y[a]-'s-s[a]-u** (ll 10-7)

* letters "ss" pronounced "sh" as in "mission."

* "u" pronounced "v"; "ss" as "sh" as in "mission."

** ** "c" and "h" transliterate "ch."

CODA 2

The many devices and their content found in *Sonnet 1* should already confirm their authenticity and support the allegory of the soul mentioned earlier. This connection becomes even stronger as whole sets of devices are found that present transliterations of lines of traditional Hebrew prayers that extoll the everlasting essence of God and commemorate the ancient Temple worship mentioned in the *Bible*.

The first of these is found in Jewish morning prayers (see page 28 of the *Artscroll* prayer book) and declares: “*Thou (that) art the One even unto the time when the world was not created; Thou art the one since the world was created; Thou art the One in this world and Thou art the One for the World to Come.*” (Note line 9 of the sonnet whose opening words appear to allude to this prayer, “*Thou that art ...*”) Below in Hebrew is the prayer followed by its transliteration. It can be read on the next page color coded in the sonnet and extracted:

אַתָּה הוּא עַד שֶׁלֹּא נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם, אַתָּה הוּא מִשְׁנִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם,
אַתָּה הוּא בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְאַתָּה הוּא לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא.

a'tah hu ad she'lo nev'rah ha'o'lam;

A'tah hu me'she'nev'rah ha'o'lam;

a'tah hu ba'o'lam ha'zeh;

ve'a'tah hu la'o'lam ha'ba;

The second prayer commemorates the use of incense in the *Bible's* Temple worship and is drawn from a line in the traditional Festival prayer, “*Ayn Ca'lo'he'nu.*” It too begins with the words, “*Thou (that) art,*” and declares, “*Thou art the One before Whom our fathers burnt the spice incense.*” Below in Hebrew and in transliteration is the prayer. It too appears on the next page:

אַתָּה הוּא שֶׁהִקְטִירוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֶת קִטְרֵת הַסַּמִּים.

*a'tah hu she'hik-tee'ru a'vo'seh'noo le'fo'ne'cha es ke'to'ret
ha'sa'meem*

SONNET 1

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauties *Rose* might neuer die,
 But as the riper **should** by time decrease,
 His tender heire might beare his memory:
 But **thou** contracted to thine owne bright eyes, _5
 Feed'st thy lights flame with selfe substantiall fewell,
 Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thy selfe thy foe, to thy sweet selfe too cruell:
Thou that art now the worlds fresh ornament,
And only herauld to the gaudy spring, _10
 Within thine owne bud buriest thy content,
 And tender chole makst wast in niggarding:
 Pitty the world, or else this glutton be,
 To eate the worlds due, by the graue and thee.

l = line; ll = lines

A-T-'T-a-h hou a-d (ll 2-3) *su-e-'l-o* (ll 6-8) *n[e]-b'ra* (ll 5-4)
h[a]-'o-w-'lam (ll 9-6)

a-'t[a]h h-o-o m[e]-'s-h-e-e-'neb'r-o (ll 4-2-5-4)
h[a]-'o-w-'l[a]em (ll 12-11-12)

a-'T[a]h hou b[a]-'o-i-e'lam (ll 2-6) *h[a]-'se* (l 6)

W[e]-'A-T-'T-a-h h-o-u lu'o-i-e'lam (ll 3-6) *h[a]'ba* (ll 6-7)
lu-'o-w-'l[a]em (ll 10-12)

a-t[a]h hu s-h-i-'h-e-c-'t-e-o-'ro-o (ll 4-2-5)

a'b-o-'t[e]-'n[u]-e (ll 7-5)

a'u-o-e't-e'n[u]-o (ll 10-7)

l[e]'f-a'n[e]'c[a]e (ll 6-7) *e-s* (ll 3-2) *c[e]-'t[o]-'reas* (ll 1-2-1)

h[a]-'s[a]-'m-eam (ll 3-6)

a-y-n (ll 14-12) *c[a]-y'l-o'-h[a]e-'n-[u]h* (ll 5-6-4-6): names the prayer commemorating the incense, transliterated in the sonnet above.

CODA 3

Again the poet astounds by his amazing synthesizing ability. In addition to having integrated all the embedded devices noted before into his sonnet, he is found to have crowned this stellar achievement with transliterations of all the congregational responses to the traditional prayer of praise to God, known as *the Kaddish (the Sanctification)*. The presence of this prayer element is a further indication of the poet's religious reverence and the role that this reverence plays in the sonnets that are to follow.

As the prayer is recited, the chief congregational *response* in answer to a similar declaration initiated by the prayer leader declares, “*May the Great Name of God be blessed for ever and ever*” and appends the echo, “*May He be blessed*” (ברוך הוא, *Be'rich Hu*). In addition, there are the briefer responses, “*Blessed is He*” (יתברך, *Yis'ba'rach*) and “*Amen*” (אמן, *A'men*). Below in Hebrew is the main response, “*Ye'hai she'mai...*,” followed by its transliteration. These responses are shown on the next page, *color-coded* as embedded in the sonnet and then extracted below it. Again, the alignments noted can be verified in the sonnet facsimile of the original quarto printing on page 16.

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעֵלָם וּלְעֵלְמֵי עֵלְמֵיָא.

Y'hei sh'mei rabbaw m'vaw'rach, l'a'llam ul'all'mei **all'ma'yaw**.
(*May His great name be blessed for ever and ever.*)

SONNET 1

From fairest **cr**eatures we desire increase,
 That there **by b**eauties Rose might neuer die,
 But as the ripe **r** should by time decease,
His tender heire **m**ight beare his **me**mory:
 But thou contracte **c** to thine owne **br**ight eyes, _5
 Feed'st thy **l**ights flame with selfe **sub**stantiall fewell,
 Making a **f**amine **w**here abundance **l**ies,
Thy selfe **thy** foe, to **thy** sweet selfe too cruell:
 Thou **th**at **art** **n**ow the **w**orlds fresh **or**namment,
 And only **h**erauld to the **g**audy **s**pring, _10
 Within thine **ow**ne **bud** **b**uriest thy content,
 And tender **ch**orle **m**ak'st **w**ast in niggarding:
 Pitty **t**he world, or else this glutton be,
 To **e**ate the worlds due, by the graue and thee.

l = line; ll = lines

y'h-a-e (ll 8-6) s-u-'ma (ll 12-11-12) r-a-'b-aw (ll 9-12)*

me-'b[o]'r-o-h (ll 4-5)*

m-o-'b[o]-r[a]c (ll 4-1)

l[e]-'o-u-w-'l[a]em (ll 10-9-12) o-o-l-'o-u-w-le'ma[e](ll 12-9-12)

a-l-'m[a]-'y-a-h (ll 7-6-9-8) y[i]-s-'b[o]-'r[a]c (ll 2-3-1)

*i-s'b[o]-'r-o-c** (ll 7-4-5)*

b[e]'-r-e[e]-c H-u (ברוך הוא)

a'm'-e'-n a-'m-en (אמן)

** “h” and “c” transliterate “ch”; “su” sounds “sh”.*

*** letters “i” and “y” often interchange in sonnets*

SHAKESPEARES, SONNETS.

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauties *Rose* might neuer die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heire might beare his memory:
But thou contracted to thine owne bright eyes,
Feed'st thy lights flame with selfe substantiall fiewell,
Making a famine where aboundance lies,
Thy selfe thy soe, to thy sweet selfe too cruell:
Thou that art now the worlds fresh ornament,
And only herauld to the gaudy spring,
Within thine owne bud buriest thy content,
And tender choric makst wast in niggarding:
Pitty the world, or else this glutton be,
To eate the worlds due, by the graue and thee.

Notes on reading quarto facsimiles:

The quarto facsimile of *Sonnet 1* above displays the original spelling, arrangement, and alignments of letters and can be used to verify alleged letter alignments in devices. The Elizabethan spelling practice is to use in midword the letter “*u*” for the “*v*” and, at the head of words, the “*v*” for the “*u*.” *The poet has used these letters interchangeably for his devices.* Also, note the replacement of the “*s*” at the beginning of words and at midword by the “*long s*” — a letter form that resembles the “*f*” but without the full crossing of the horizontal bar at its center stem. The Elizabethan letter “*i*” is also the letter “*j*.”