

LYCIDAS—THE STYLE OF RESURRECTION

Milton's style allows him, in the final part of the poem, to seamlessly combine multiple resurrections: the sun, the rebirth of the verdant earth in springtime, Christ, and the rising up of Lycidas into heaven. This is an ambitious task indeed, and accounts for the veritable medley of imagery near the end of the poem.

Line 165 marks the turn toward rebirth with the line, “Weep no more, wofull shepherds weep no more,” The alliteration of the W and the assonance of the O sound in this line give it a proclamatory effect. The repetition of the phrase “weep no more” becomes a melodic refrain that he returns to again 20 lines down, this time torquing the line to read, “Now Lycidas the shepherds weep no more.” (Line 182). In the first usage of the phrase, “weep no more,” Milton means it as an indirect command, but in the second phrase it presents an action that has already occurred—now the shepherds “weep no more.”

This line: '**Now** Lycidas' precedes the final three lines, two of which begin with “And **now**.” The repetition of 'now' creates an echo effect. After using the word 'sunk' and its variations three times in the second to last stanza, Milton finally enacts the rising in the second to last line, “At last he rose.” He literally means the shepherd stands up to go, but he couches Lycidas' rising in this description of the shepherd standing. This final image ties all of the images of the poem together—the shepherd rises, Jesus rises, the sun rises, and so does Lycidas. The poem which has sunk into the depths of lament rises into a remarkably hopeful voice poised toward the future using time words like 'new' and 'now', “To morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.”