**Classical and Biblical Allusions in *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde***



**Chapter 1: It wasn’t like a man; it was like some damned Juggernaut**

Juggernaut is the anglicised name of the Hindu god Jagannath. In an annual festival, a large, heavy wooden model of Jagannath is taken from the temple in Puri, placed in a chariot and then pulled along by hundreds of volunteers. Linked to this, the English word ‘juggernaut’ connotes a crushing, powerful force.

**Chapter 1: ‘I incline to Cain’s heresy,’ he used to say. ‘I let my brother go to the devil in his quaintly own way’**

Cain’s heresy is his claim not to care about his brother’s welfare or safety. In response to a question by God about Abel’s whereabouts, Cain replies, ‘I know not; am I my brother’s keeper?’ Stevenson uses this story to suggest that Utterson chooses not to get involved in the private business of others.

**Chapter 2: ‘Such unscientific balderdash,’ added the doctor, flushing suddenly purple, ‘would have estranged Damon and Pythias’**

In Greek literature, Damon and Pythias are two famous friends. When Damon was condemned to die, he requested time to settle his affairs. Initially, his request was refused. In response, Pythias pleaded for Damon to be allowed to leave and pledged his own life if he failed to return. Damon did indeed return and both men received pardons for their extraordinary display of loyalty.

**Chapter 2: Or can it be the old story of Dr Fell?**

‘I do not like thee, Dr Fell’ is a short poem from 1680 (an adapted translation of a Latin epigram), attributed to the satirist Tom Brown. The speaker claims to not like Dr Fell and says, ‘The reason why I cannot tell’. Utterson uses the allusion to emphasise his inability to identify the source of his feelings of ‘disgust, loathing, and fear’ for Hyde.

**Chapter 2: O my poor old Harry Jekyll, if ever I read Satan’s signature upon a face, it is on that of your new friend**

Satan, also known as the Devil or Lucifer, was an angel who rebelled against God and was punished by being cast out of Heaven to ‘bottomless perdition, there to dwell in adamantine chains and eternal fire’. Like Hyde, he is the embodiment of evil and sin.

**Chapter 10: Like the captives of Philippi, that which stood within ran forth**

After Mark Anthony and Octavian were triumphant in two battles in the Macedonian city of Philippi, they chose to free the captives who had chosen to side with Cassius and Brutus. Ordinarily, the captives of Philippi would have been executed or enslaved.

**Chapter 10: Men have before hired bravos to transact their crimes, while their own person and reputation sat under shelter**

‘Bravo’ roughly translates into English as ‘bold’ from the original French and Italian. However, within the context that Jekyll uses the word, the meaning shifts to ‘thug’ or ‘assassin’. Bravos were paid to murder or steal on behalf of wealthy benefactors.

**Chapter 10: This inexplicable incident, this reversal of my previous experience, seemed, like the Babylonian finger on the wall**

The story of Belshazzar appears in the Bible in the Book of Daniel. Amidst a great feast held by Belshazzar in Babylon, a mysterious hand appeared and wrote on the wall. Belshazzar was unable to decipher the writing, so he eventually called for Daniel, a young Jewish man known for his wisdom. Daniel told Belshazzar that the writing prophesised his downfall.