

Masters of War

Bob Dylan

	Come you masters of war You that build all the guns You that build the death planes You that build the big bombs		You've thrown the worst fear That can ever be hurled
5	You that hide behind walls You that hide behind desks I just want you to know I can see through your masks	35	Fear to bring children Into the world For threatening my baby Unborn and unnamed You ain't worth the blood
	You that never done nothin' 10 But build to destroy You play with my world Like it's your little toy You put a gun in my hand And you hide from my eyes		How much do I know To talk out of turn? You might say that I'm young You might say I'm unlearned
15	And you turn and run farther When the fast bullets fly	45	But there's one thing I know Though I'm younger than you Even Jesus would never Forgive what you do
	Like Judas of old You lie and deceive A world war can be won		Let me ask you one question
20	You want me to believe But I see through your eyes And I see through your brain Like I see through the water That runs down my drain	50	Is your money that good? Will it buy you forgiveness? Do you think that it could? I think you will find When your death takes its toll
25	You fasten the triggers For the others to fire Then you set back and watch When the death count gets higher	55	All the money you made Will never buy back your soul
30	As young people's blood Flows out of their bodies And is buried in the mud		And I hope that you die And your death'll come soon I will follow your casket
		60	In the pale afternoon And I'll watch while you're lowered Down to your deathbed And I'll stand o'er your grave 'Til I'm sure that you're dead

Questions for Discussion and Writing

1. What is the tone of the song? Who are the “masters of war,” and what can we infer about the speaker? Discuss the significance of point of view in the song.
2. What characteristics do the “masters of war” have, according to the speaker’s description? What motivates them?
 - In what sense do they “hide behind desks” (line 6) and “hide in [their] mansion”?
 - What does it mean that the speaker can “see through [their] masks” (line 8)?
 - What is implied by the simile in lines 11-12?
 - In what sense are they threatening the speaker’s unborn child (lines 33-40)?
 - Identify the Biblical allusions in the song and discuss their significance.

Lyrics and Discussion Questions for “Masters of War”

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