

:William Langland and His work- Piers the Plowman:

- **Introduction:**

- ★ Nothing is known for certain about William Langland. Very little we know about him. He was born in West Midlands of England in 1332 ; grew up as a poor, probably was a priest of one of the lowest orders(saying prayer for dead person).
- ★ The full title of the poem - **The vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman.**
- ★ The poem was written in **West Midlands dialect.**
- ★ **Piers the Plowman** explains what life is life for a ordinary person by telling a story of a country man named Piers who attains salvation by valuing his labours. To him salvation only lies in the honest labour and in the service of Christ.
- ★ Basically Langland here talked about spiritualism , dangers of materialism , sins and life and satirized the corruption among the clergy and secular authority ; also depicted the sufferings and miseries of the needy. Piers, here, upholds the dignity and the value of labour.
- ★ There are several versions of the poem - named A text, B text and C text. Some scholars also report that another version named Z text also remains. Recently it has been assumed that three forms- A,B and C were all the work of Langland who constantly revised his poem. On the other hand, the

latest theory is that A text was the genuine composition of Langland ,where B and C had been composed by a later and inferior poet.

- ★ A text, 1362, is the earliest and shortest, which is being about two thousand and five hundred lines.
- ★ B text ,1377,is more than seven thousand three hundred lines, considerable amplification of the A.
- ★ C text ,1392, is based upon the B having around the same line numbers.

To be continued...