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*Macbeth*: The Devil-Porter

After Macbeth's murder of King Duncan in Shakespeare's tragedy, *Macbeth*, Shakespeare immediately symbolizes the Porter as the Devil through Biblical allusions, foreshadowing Macbeth's deterioration by illustrating how those who commit wrongdoings must face the lifelong repercussions that accompany those crimes.

Not long after Macbeth has killed the king, Shakespeare utilizes Biblical allusions to introduce the inebriated Porter, who slurs, "Who's there, i' the name of Beelzebub?" (II, iii, 4-5) in the midst of his drunken haze. Shakespeare alludes to the Biblical prince of devils, Beelzebub, implying that the blood-stained Macbeth has awakened the Devil--symbolized through the Porter--and thus can never escape the clutches of Hell in life and death. Shakespeare continues to allude to Biblical constructions of Hell, such as when the Porter admits various thieves, liars, and other sinners to the "primrose way to th' everlasting bonfire" (II, iii, 19). As a result, Shakespeare's allusion to the Bible verses Matthew 7.13-14, a similar depiction of the damned taking the more comfortable course to Hell, emphasizes how those who commit crimes for their own personal gain, such as Macbeth, end up contributing to their own deterioration. Whether it is during life or after death, immoral actions come with long-lasting consequences.

As evidenced through Shakespeare's Biblical allusions, which effectively symbolize the Porter as the Devil and his role in foreshadowing Macbeth's decline, the extent of one's corruption can mean the difference between following the primrose way to the bonfire or to the heavens.