

In the merchant of Venice, 3 is a special number.

In Belmont there are three caskets

There are three messages, one on each casket

There are three brides

Portia Nerissa Jessica

three husbands

Bassanio Gratiano Lorenzo

three rings to seal

marriage bonds

This use of the #3 gives the play a sense of harmony and mythology.

It is also part of the woman's world which is Belmont in the play.

Shakespeare sets up a contrast with the man's world which should be anything but mythological and harmonious. The man's world is logical and full of conflict.