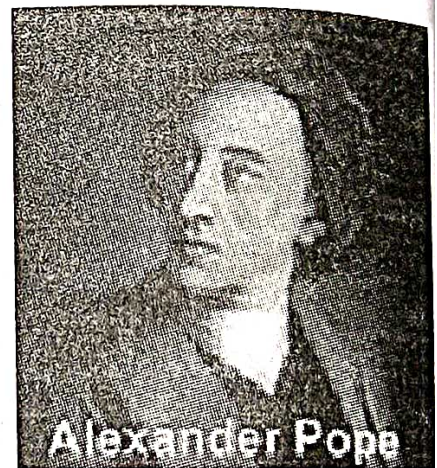


ODE ON SOLITUDE

Alexander Pope

ALEXANDER POPE (1688-1744), was one of the greatest satirists of the early 18th century. He was also a critic. But he is remembered chiefly as a satirist. This vein of his poetry is best expressed in 'The Rape of the Lock' 'The Dunciad' and 'The Epistles'. Two of his other famous works are 'Essay On Criticism' and 'Essay On Man.'



Ode is a poem addressed to a person or an object. The Greek word 'ode' meant a choric song generally accompanied by dance. The term is presently used to refer to long, meditative lyric poems that in dignified manner address a noble subject. In the present poem 'Ode On Solitude' the poet draws a beautiful picture of a happy man.

A. Answer the following questions very briefly:

1. How many of you want to be happy? What leads to happiness?
2. What makes our life happy - money or contentment or both? Discuss.

ODE ON SOLITUDE

97

3. Have you ever visited a remote village adorned with natural beauty and a capital town full of sky-scrapers? Which one would you like and why?

Happy the man whose wish and care

A few paternal acres bound,

Content to breathe his native air

In his own ground.

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,

5

Whose flocks supply him with attire;

Whose trees in summer yield him shade,

In winter fire.

Blest, who can unconcernedly find

Hours, days, and years, slide soft away

10

In health of body, peace of mind,

Quiet by day.

B.1. Answer the following questions very briefly:

1. Who is a happy man?
2. Who (m) does the pronoun 'his' in the third line of the 1st stanza refer to?
3. Who gives him milk?
4. What gives him bread?
5. From where does he get his clothes?
6. How do trees help him?

Sound sleep by night; study and ease
Together mixt, sweet recreation,
And innocence, which most does please

15

With meditation

Thus let me live unseen, unknown;
Thus unlamented let me die;
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.

20

B.2. Answer the following questions very briefly:

1. Name the poem and the poet.
2. Who is a blessed man?
3. How does a happy man spend his time?
4. Who (m) does 'me' refer to in the last stanza?
5. What do you mean by 'slide soft away'?
6. What does the poet wish for after death?
7. How does the poet want to live?
8. How does the poet want to die?
9. What are the features of a happy life?

GLOSSARY AND NOTES

paternal (adj) : inherited from father

content (adj) : satisfied

native air (n) : air of one's homeland

herds (n) : cattle

attire (n) : dress, clothing

recreation (n) : entertainment

ODE ON SOLITUDE

99

meditation (n) : practice of thinking deeply in silence, contemplation

unlamented (adj) : unmourned, not very sad

unconcernedly (adv) : in an untroubled manner or not in worried or anxious manner

lie (v) : to bury, remain passively in a horizontal position

C.1. LONG ANSWER QUESTIONS

1. The poet thinks that those who are content with what they have are happy men. Do you agree? Give reasons.
2. What does the speaker mean by Together mixt, sweet recreation. Can these things be mixed? Have you ever tried to do so?
3. Why does the poet want to live and die stealthily from the world. How many of you would like to do so? And Why?
4. Is the title of the poem justified? Can you suggest any other title? Give reasons for your choice.

C.2. GROUP DISCUSSION

Discuss the following in groups or pairs.

1. Are we happier than our forefathers?
2. Is village life better than city life?

C.3. COMPOSITION

1. Write a letter to your younger brother/sister living in Patna about the effects of noise pollution due to congested traffic.
2. Write a paragraph in about 100 words:
 - (a) The importance of trees
 - (b) Bliss of solitude

D. WORD STUDY

D.1. Dictionary Use

Ex.1. Correct the spellings of the following words:

patternal

breeth

atire

unconcernadly

inocence

unlmented

D.2. Ex. 1. Find out from the poem words the meaning of which have been given on the left hand side. The last part of each word is given on the right hand side.

1. A measurement unit re
2. dressings, clothes re
3. holy or lucky ed
4. inherited from father al
5. Indifferently ly

Ex. 2. Fill in the blanks with suitable words given below:

native

peace

sound

content

meditation

1. I didn't get a sleep last night.
2. She found peace through yoga and
3. Mr. Jha lay back and enjoyed the of the Summer Evening.
4. Mrs. Sinha is with what he has.
5. Mr. Maung is a speaker of English.

E. GRAMMAR

Look at the following examples:

- a) He lives in his own house.
- b) Can you finish the work by the end of the day?

Here words 'in' and 'by' used above to show relationship. Such words are called prepositions.

Use - Prep. normally precede noun and pronouns.

Some more examples:

(A) Prepositions of Time and Date	Travel and Movement	Position
at, on, by, before in, from, since, for, during, to, till, until, after, afterwards, etc.	from, to, at, in, by, on, into, onto, off, out of, with, across, through along, etc.	above, below, over, under, beside, between, among, behind, in front of, but, except, etc

Ex.1. Find out five prepositions from the poem and frame sentences of your own.

Ex.2. Insert suitable prepositions in the following sentences:

1. He was knocked down bus.
2. She saved him drowning.
3. What is it made ?
4. Yesterday, I had an argument Mr. Sinha.
5. It took us an hour complete this assignment.

F. ACTIVITY

Study the following:

Care - air; bound - ground

These are called rhyming words. A word that has the same sound or ends with the same letter as another word is called rhyme.

Can you think of a rhyme for "beauty"?

Ex.1. Make a list of four pairs of rhyming words used in the poem.

Ex.2. Work in pairs and talk about the things which make you happy or unhappy.

G. TRANSLATION

Translate the poem into your mother tongue.

Happy the man whose wish and care

A few paternal acres bound,

Content to breathe his native air

In his own ground.
