

Unit -13

lesson-2

Solitude

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox

Laugh, and the world laughs with you;
Weep, and you weep alone;
For the sad old earth must borrow its mirth,
But has trouble enough of its own.
Sing, and the hills will answer;
Sigh, it is lost on the air;
The echoes bound to a joyful sound,
But shrink from voicing care.

Rejoice, and men will seek you;
Grieve, and they turn and go;
They want full measure of all your pleasure,
But they do not need your woe.
Be glad, and your friends are many;
Be sad, and you lose them all,
There are none to decline your nectared wine,
But alone you must drink life's gall.

Feast, and your halls are crowded;
Fast, and the world goes by.
Succeed and give, and it helps you live;
But no man can help you die.
There is room in the halls of pleasure
For a large and lordly train,
But one by one we must all file on
Through the narrow aisles of pain.

হাসো, আর পৃথিবীও তোমার সঙ্গে হাসে;
কাঁদো, আর তুমি একাই কাঁদো;
কারণ এই বিষণ্ণ পুরনো পৃথিবীকে আনন্দ ধার করতে হয়,
তবু তার নিজেরই দুঃখ অনেক।

গাও, আর পাহাড়গুলো সাড়া দেয়;
নিশ্বাস ফেলো, তা হাওয়ায় মিলিয়ে যায়;
প্রতিধ্বনি কেবল আনন্দময় সুরে ফিরে আসে,
দুঃখ প্রকাশে তারা মুখ ফিরিয়ে নেয়।

আনন্দ করো, মানুষ তোমার কাছে ছুটে আসে;
দুঃখ করো, তারা ফিরে যায়;
তারা চায় তোমার আনন্দের ভাণ্ডার,
তবে তোমার দুঃখ তাদের দরকার নেই।

খুশি থাকলে বন্ধু থাকে পাশে;
দুঃখে পড়লে সবাই দূরে সরে যায়,
মধুর মদ সবাই চায়, কেউ ফিরিয়ে দেয় না,
কিন্তু জীবনের তেতো বিষ একাই পান করতে হয়।

ভোজ দাও, তোমার প্রাসাদ ভরে ওঠে;
উপবাস করো, আর দুনিয়া চলে যায় পাশ কাটিয়ে।
সফল হও এবং দাও, তবে তবেই জীবন চলবে;
কিন্তু তোমার মৃত্যুর ভার কেউ নিতে পারবে না।

আনন্দের প্রাসাদে থাকে অনেক জনের স্থান,
কিন্তু ব্যথার সরু পথ পেরোতে হয় একা, একা, একা।

Questions

1. What is the central theme of the poem?
2. Why does the poet contrast laughter and weeping?
3. How does the world respond to joy and sorrow, according to the poet?
4. What literary device is used in “Laugh, and the world laughs with you”?
5. What does “weep, and you weep alone” imply about human nature?
6. Why does the poet say “the sad old earth must borrow its mirth”?
7. What is the significance of the phrase “has trouble enough of its own”?
8. How do the hills respond to singing and sighing?
9. What do the echoes symbolize in the second stanza?
10. Why do echoes “shrink from voicing care”?
11. According to the poet, how do people behave in happy times?
12. How do people react when someone grieves?
13. What does “full measure of all your pleasure” suggest?
14. Why are friends “many” when one is glad?

15. How does sorrow affect relationships, according to the poem?
16. What is meant by “nectared wine” in the poem?
17. What does “life’s gall” symbolize?
18. How are the lines “Feast, and your halls are crowded; / Fast, and the world goes by” metaphorical?
19. What contrast does the poet draw between success and failure?
20. How does society treat generous people versus those in need?
21. Why does the poet mention that “no man can help you die”?
22. What does the “hall of pleasure” symbolize?
23. Explain the significance of the line “we must all file on through the narrow aisles of pain.”
24. What message does the poem give about human companionship?
25. How does the poem reflect individualism?
26. What is the tone of the poem?
27. Why do people avoid those who are sad or in grief? (*New Question*)
28. How does the structure of the poem support its theme?
29. What is the poet’s attitude toward sorrow and loneliness?
30. What moral lesson does the poem teach?

Answer:

1. The central theme of the poem is the human tendency to embrace joy and avoid sorrow. It emphasizes the loneliness one experiences during hardship and the companionship found only in happiness.
2. The poet contrasts laughter and weeping to highlight society’s selective sympathy. People are quick to join in others’ joy but slow to share their burdens.
3. According to the poet, the world readily shares in your happiness but abandons you in times of grief. Joy attracts people, while sorrow isolates you.
4. The poem uses antithesis and parallelism as literary devices to show the contrast between joy and sorrow. This strengthens the emotional impact of each line.
5. The line implies that people prefer to distance themselves from sadness. It reflects how society values cheerfulness and avoids emotional discomfort.

6. The poet means that happiness isn't abundant in the world; it must be sought or "borrowed." Earth itself lacks joy and struggles with its own sorrow.
7. The phrase means that the world has enough of its own suffering and doesn't want to deal with others' grief. It suggests emotional detachment in society.
8. Singing brings a joyful response from the hills, showing how nature echoes happiness. But sighing goes unnoticed, representing how sadness is ignored or lost.
9. The echoes symbolize society's reactions. Joyful sounds are echoed and celebrated, while sorrowful expressions are silenced.
10. Because people and even nature recoil from sadness. They are unwilling to reflect grief or share in it.
11. People are drawn to those who are happy because they want to feel good. They flock to joy like moths to a flame.
12. People often avoid those who are grieving because they don't want to confront sadness. This makes the grieving person feel even more alone.
13. It means that people want to enjoy your happiness in full. They are eager to celebrate with you but disappear in your hard times.
14. Happiness attracts many companions because people are drawn to joy. They enjoy being part of a cheerful environment.
15. Sorrow drives people away because most are uncomfortable with sadness. It often reveals who your true friends are.
16. "Nectared wine" symbolizes the sweet, desirable parts of life. Everyone wants to share in those enjoyable experiences.
17. "Life's gall" refers to the bitter, painful moments of life. These are often faced alone, without support.
18. These lines are metaphorical for how people only show up when things are good. In hard times, they avoid or ignore you.
19. The poet shows that success brings support and admiration, while failure leaves you isolated. Society respects achievement, not struggle.
20. Generous people are appreciated because they give. But when someone is in need or suffering, they are often neglected.
21. The poet means that while others may help in life, death is a solitary experience. No one can truly share that final journey.

22. The “hall of pleasure” represents the joyful, social side of life. It is filled with people who want to celebrate and enjoy.
23. The line means that pain is a journey each person must walk alone. Life’s difficult times cannot be shared in the same way as happiness.
24. The poem suggests that human companionship is conditional. People tend to stay only in good times and withdraw during adversity.
25. The poem highlights the importance of inner strength. It shows that you must rely on yourself, especially in times of sorrow.
26. The tone is reflective and slightly melancholic. It acknowledges the harsh truths of human behavior and social dynamics.
27. People avoid the grieving because sorrow makes them uncomfortable. They do not want to deal with emotional weight or pain they cannot fix.
28. The poem’s structure uses paired contrasts to emphasize its message. Each stanza balances opposites like joy vs sorrow, feast vs fast, success vs failure.
29. The poet sees sorrow and loneliness as inevitable parts of life. They must be faced individually, as support is rarely consistent during hard times.
30. The moral lesson is that joy attracts companionship, but pain must often be endured alone. It teaches self-reliance and emotional strength.