**QUESTION BANK: P10 PSALM OF LIFE**

**1. What does the poet tell us he doesn’t want to hear? (3)**

**Ans:** The poet says that he doesn’t want to hear the repeated saying that life is just an empty dream. This is usually spoken in mournful numbers also it is said that if a soul is slumbering it is dead and things are not what they seem. The poet does not want to believe in any of these things.

**2. Explain: For the soul is dead that slumbers, and things are not what they seem. (2)**

**Ans:** We are told that if the soul is inactive it is as good as dead. Also, the world is called as unreal in many of our religious texts. The poet doesn’t want to believe these things.

**3. How does the poet describe life? (3)**

**Ans:** The poet says that life is very much real and earnest. It is in contrast to the belief that life is unreal. Also he says that the goal of life is not the grave. The soul of a person is very much alive even after the person is no more.

**4. What according to the poet was not spoken of the soul? Why was it spoken then? (3)**

**Ans:** According to the poet, ‘Dust thou art, to dust thou returnest’ was not spoken of the soul. It was spoken only about the body. In saying this, the poet means that though the body of the person is mortal, his soul remains immortal.

**5. What should not be our destined end or way? What should be our way then? (3)**

**Ans:** Enjoyment and sorrow should not be our destined end or way. We have to take action so that each tomorrow finds us farther than today. We must strive to be better and better by every passing day.

**6. How does the poet bring about urgency of doing things to us? (3)**

**Ans:** The poet tells us that art is long and time is fleeting. By this he means, it takes a long time to acquire a perfect technique of to master any craft. The time is indeed escaping and we need to make good use of the present time so that we are able to be perfect with whatever we do.

**7. Which metaphor does the poet use for heart? How does he bring about the comparison? (4)**

**Ans:** The metaphor that the poet uses to describe heart is drum. The beating of the heart is compared to muffled drum. Just as if the drum is covered up, its beating is barely audible similarly our heartbeat is barely audible because of our body it covers it up. Our hearts are called as stout and brave.

**8. What does our heartbeat ought to remind us of? (3)**

**Ans:** Our heartbeat ought to remind us of death. The beat here is compared to a march-past. This march-past is steadily taking us to our grave. That is the reason we need to use our time well.

**9. What is the world compared to? How does poet compare life? (4)**

**Ans:** The world is compared to a battlefield. It is a battlefield in which each one of us is fighting for our daily existence. Life is compared to a bivouac. Bivouac is a temporary shelter used to by the fighters in a battlefield. Similarly, life is a temporary shelter that we have been provided with, in the battlefield of the world.

Shelter used by the fighters

**10. What does the poet not want us to be like? What would he prefer us to be? (3)**

**Ans:** The poet doesn’t want us to be like a dumb, driven cattle. He doesn’t want that we should blindly follow whatever others have done with a herd mentality. He would prefer us to be a hero in the strife.

**11. Whom should we not trust according to the poet? Who should be buried? (3)**

**Ans:** According to the poet, we should not trust Future even if it is pleasant. He wants us to bury the Past which is dead. He wants us to act in the living Present.

**12. How does the poet want us to act in the Present? (3)**

**Ans:** The poet wants us to act without any fear in the Present. We should remember that we have a heart within and God overhead. This should give us the courage to act fearlessly in the present.

**13. What should lives of great men remind us? (3)**

**Ans:** Lives of great men should remind us that we too can make our lives sublime. While we are leaving this world, we can leave the footprints on the sand of time. These are those footprints which can inspire posterity.

**14. How can our footprints be an inspiration for people in trouble? (3)**

**Ans:** Our footprints can inspire a forlorn and shipwrecked brother. While sailing over, life’s solemn main (ocean) he has faced disaster. But looking at our footprints he may take heart again. This inspiration can lead him out of the state of despair and desolation.

**15. What is life compared to in the second last stanza of the poem? (3)**

**Ans:** Life is compared to a main (ocean) in the second last stanza of the poem. The comparison is made because, just like a rough ocean where we have to face storms so it is with life. We go through ups and downs in life frequently.

**16. What attitude does the poet describe in the last stanza of the poem? (4)**

**Ans:** In the last stanza of the poem, the poet tells us that we should be up and doing. We should actively participate in life and work hard to achieve success but we should be prepared for any fate. Even if we achieve things in life still we should continue the pursuit. After the labour sometimes the fruits of success get delayed. In such circumstances we should have patience.

**17. What must humans be in their own battle? (3)**

**Ans:** The poet says that humans must be the heroes of their own battle. They should not be lax and lazy like cattle. They should be swift and active. They need to make their own decisions and treat the world as a battlefield. They must accept challenges and emerge victorious in the battle of life.

**18. Why does the poet urge humans to live in the Present? (3)**

**Ans:** The poet urges humans to live in the Present by saying that even if the Future seems to be pleasant he cannot be trustworthy. The Past is already dead and should be buried. However Present is alive and is the only time we can work in. Investing in Present will surely give good results.

**19. How does the poet effectively use personification in the poem? (3)**

**Ans:** Words like ‘Present’, ‘Past’ and ‘Future’ are given in capital letters as they are personified. Present is called living, Past is referred to as dead whereas Future is called pleasant but untrustworthy.

**20. Which line from the poem is an allusion to the Bible? (3)**

**Ans:** The line ‘Dust thou art, to dust thou returnest’ is an allusion to the Bible. It is taken from the book of Genesis 3:19. The meaning of the lines is human beings are born out of the five elements of the nature and go back to the same.