

## **XII ENGLISH LITERATURE**

### **POEM – CROSSING THE BAR**

#### **Stanza 1**

Sunset and evening star,  
And one clear call for me!  
And may there be no moaning of the bar,  
When I put out to sea,

The poem begins with the phrase sunset and evening star. It depicts the transitional time between day and night. It marks the end of the day and the beginning of the night. In a deeper sense, it also refers to the stage of life and death or end of life and beginning of the afterlife.

In the next line, the poet says that he has clearly heard a call and thus it is the time for him to leave the place (world). He suggests that no one should weep or cry after he put out to sea. The phrase I put out to sea refers to the fact that he is at the brink of death.

Now if we read the stanza in reverse order it becomes easier to understand that the poet is about to die. He is suggesting others not to weep for him. He has heard a clear voice; this voice can be of his heart. It tells him that the evening of his life has arrived and he should begin the new journey.

It came from deep inside the sea and now going back to its origin. Going deeper into the words we find that the tide here refers to the life.

The poet says that though he seems to be alive yet he is dead as he has no energy left. He is now going back to the place from where he came to the world.

#### **Stanza 2**

But such a tide as moving seems  
Too full for sound and foam,  
When that which drew from out the deep  
Turns again home.

The second stanza can be an explanation of the first one. The poet says the tide which was full of might is moving now in such a way that it seems to be quiet and weak. Its might is gone it can neither produce sound nor foam.

It came from deep inside the sea and now going back to its origin. Going deeper into the words we find that the tide here refers to the life.

The poet says that though he seems to be alive yet he is dead as he has no energy left. He is now going back to the place from where he came to the world.

### **Stanza 3**

Twilight and evening bell,

And after that the dark!

And may there be no sadness of far

When I embark;

The third stanza is quite similar to the first one. The poet uses different images to depict the same ideas described in the first stanza. He says that it is evening now and the evening bell has rung.

After this, it would be dark. In a deeper sense, his end is near. Now he will die. Again he asks his friends not to be sad after he has gone.

### **Stanza 4**

For tho' from out our bourne of Time

The flood may bear me far,

I hope to see my Pilot face to face

When I have cross the bar.

The ending stanza is quite interesting as it answers why the poet is willing to die. The poet says that after his death he will be free from the bonds of time and place. The word flood

The ending stanza is quite interesting as it answers why the poet is willing to kill himself. The poet says that after his death he will be free from the bonds of time and place. The word flood here refers to the afterlife journey.

The poet says that the journey will take him away from the limitations of the world and then only he will be able to see his Pilot or the One who has brought him in the world and is taking him back to his original home.

All this will happen once he crosses the bar i.e. the wall between life and death. The poet thus presumes to see his Pilot (God).

This line makes it clear that like other Victorians he also desires to see God but cannot do so. He thinks that he will be able to see him only when he leaves the world.

### **ASSIGNMENT :**

1. Write about the theme of the poem 'Crossing the bar ' by Tennyson.