



NOTES:

UNIT: II (poetry-ii)

TO THE SKYLARK BY William Wordsworth

ABOUT THE POEM

'To the Skylark' is a beautiful poem written by William Wordsworth, the high priest of nature. In this poem, he describes the activities of the skylark. The poet also puts some questions to the lark about his feelings relating to the earth and man in the first stanza. The poet sees the skylark as connecting heaven and earth and the bird never forgets the earth though he soars high into the sky. The character of the skylark, in the poem, clearly shows that Wordsworth never forgot man and his problems in the world.

SUBSTANCE

The skylark, as the poet describes, is an unearthly bird who takes a pilgrimage in the sky. The poet asks the skylark if he flies towards the sky because he hates the earth being a place where there are full of cares and anxieties. The poet does not think the skylark to hate the earth for he can drop down to the earth at will. Wordsworth calls the skylark as a daring singer as he flies high up the sky and sings his devotional song without any fear. His song inspired by the love of God fills not only the sky but the plains of the earth also. The bird never forgets his ties with the earth. The bird also has a unique privilege to sing independently in any season. The poet asks the bird to leave the spring season to the nightingale as he can sing his hymn in the glorious light of the heaven from where he should pour the songs of heavenly harmony on the earth. Lastly, the poet describes the skylark as a wise bird who never forgets the earth though he always thinks of divine things like devotion, love, harmony, etc.

WORD NOTES

Line 1-6 (First Stanza):

Ethereal – unearthly/ heavenly.

Minstrel – singer.

Pilgrim – a person who goes on a long journey to visit a religious place.

Dost – do/does (poetic).

Despise – hate.

Thou – you (old English, *subjective form*).

Cares – worries (for something/ somebody).

Thy – your (old English, *possessive form*).

Canst – can (archaic).

Quivering – fluttering.

Line 7-12 (Second Stanza):

Vision – sight.
Last point of vision – as far as one can see.
Mount – ascend, here, fly up.
Daring – courageous/ brave.
Warbler – singer.
Daring warbler – the skylark is not afraid of flying high up in the sky.
Love-prompted strain – song inspired by the love of God.
Thee – you (old English, *Objective form*), here, the skylark.
Thine – yours (old English, *possessive form*)
A never-failing bond – a relationship that never breaks.
Thrills not the less – the thrill that is not less at any rate.
Bosom of the plain – the plain of the earth.
Might'st – might.
Privilege – a special right/ advantage. Here, the skylark's advantage of being independent of singing in any season.
Leafy Spring – thick and dark leaves of the spring season.

Line 13-18 (Last Stanza):

Shady wood – shadowy woods of the spring season.
Privacy – a state of being hidden/ private.
Glorious light – Heavenly light.
Whence – from where (poetic).
Pour upon the world – pour down your song upon the world.
Flood – Flood of the skylark's harmonious song.
Instinct more divine – inborn skill of singing divine song.
The kindred points – meeting points.
Home – the earth.
True to the – a wise man thinks in true and wise way, i.e. divine.