**NO MEN ARE FOREIGN**

**By– James Kirkup**

**INTRODUCTION**

Have you ever thought of some people as strange, or other countries as “foreign”? We have many ways to think of other people as different from “us”, as “them”. “They” may belong to a different country, or speak a different language. In this poem, however. the poet reminds us of the many ways in which we are all the same: for we are all human.

***Introduction***

The poem “No Men arc Foreign” by James Kirkup is a strong plea for peaceful co-existence and universal brotherhood. God has made us all equal and the colour of our blood is the same. Human emotions are the same. too. Thus people all over the world are brothers and sisters and the manmade Ku-Tiers e4 class or creed arc unnatural and undesirable.

***THEME***

The theme of the poem “No Men are Foreign” is the oneness of mankind underneath the superficial differences of colour, race, nationality and faith. It presupposes that all human beings are brothers and sisters. Those who spread hatred and wage wars are criminals and deserve to be condemned. The poem also deals with the supremacy of love, accord, friendship and amity among all the people in this world.

 ***TITLE***

“No Men are Foreign” is an apt title for the poem, because it deals with the theme of universal brotherhood. Human beings all over the world have identical behaviour and the differences based on the manmade concepts of caste, creed, barriers etc. are unnatural. Every human being responds positively to love. Hence no human being is a foreigner or an outsider.

***MESSAGE***

This is a peace poem and gives a strong message to stop all wars and look upon humanity as a unified entity. The poet warns the rulers of all the countries that when they wage wars they not only injure the interests of those whom they hate but also injure themselves. They should know that peace brings prosperity and wars bring destruction. Hence, those who spread hatred and cause wars against their brothers and sisters in different parts of the world actually harm the cause of peaceful mutual co-existence.

***LITERARY DEVICES***

***Alliteration***

*Alliteration is the close repetition of consonant sounds at the beginning of successive words (initial alliteration) and within words (internal alliteration).*

***Examples****:*

* *a single body breathes*

*(‘ b’ sound is repeated at the beginning of each word)*

* *Or sleep, and strength*

*(‘ s’ sound is repeated)*

***Metaphor***

 A figure of speech in which a word or phrase (which is not linked directly) is used to describe an object or action through comparison.

***Examples****:*

* *Beneath all uniforms, a single body breathes*

 ‘Uniforms’ here basically stand for militaries that different countries in the world have. These uniforms may be different in colour, design, shape and culture, but people donning them are the same anywhere in the world.

* *war’s long winter starv’ d*

Here the starvation experienced during unproductive and harsh winters describes the want and hunger faced during war-time. Both these conditions lead to ultimate destruction.

***Repetition***

Poets often repeat single words or phrases, lines, and sometimes, even whole stanzas at intervals to create a musical effect; to emphasize a point; to draw the readers’ attention or to lend unity to a piece. In “No Men are Foreign” James Kirkup repeats the word ‘Remember’ five times in the poem to emphasize the serious message the poem has to convey. Similarly, the last line of the last stanza (“Remember, no men are foreign, and no countries strange”) though reversed, is the same as the first line of the first stanza (“Remember, no men are strange, no countries foreign”). This repetition emphasizes the core message of the oneness of mankind.

***RHYME SCHEME***

The poem doesn’t have any specific rhyme scheme. It is written in free verse.

**Poetic Devices**

1. **Metaphor**

 This rhetorical device is used when a covert comparison is made between two different things or ideas. In this poem, the poet uses the device of metaphor in the 3rd line as he compares his fellow human beings with his own brothers. He again uses it in the 6th line when he compares war with winter since reduced resources are available at both those sides. He uses it for the last time in the 18th line when he compares wars with hells.

1. **Transferred Epithet**

This rhetorical device is used when emotion is attributed to a non-living thing after being displaced from a person, most often the poet himself or herself. In this poem, the poet uses the device of the transferred epithet in the 6th line when he writes the phrase “peaceful harvests”. It is not the harvests themselves that are peaceful, but peaceful social and political conditions that prevent a shortage of crops or famine and make harvests possible.

**Value Points**

* The central idea of this poem is that we have the same father — God.
* As we are the children of God, we should believe in universal brotherhood.
* We all have a common right to the earth — a common property.
* We should not treat ourselves as the citizens of a particular country.
* We should not support narrow nationalism.
* Instead, we should think that we are the citizens of the world.
* Wars are not good for us. During wars, we suffer and in peace we make progress. So, we should try to live peacefully.