

# LONDON

SAMUEL JOHNSON

Samuel Johnson wrote this poem when he moved to London in 1738. The poem contains 263 lines. There was a Roman poet Juvenal and Samuel Johnson copied the Third Satire from Juvenal. In this poem Johnson has used a character named Thales who is leaving London. In Juvenal's Third Satire there is a character named Umbricius who is leaving Rome because he felt that the city of Rome is dangerous. Copying from this Johnson has changed the name Umbricius to Thales who is also leaving London to get rid off from the city and he is moving to Cambria situated in Wales. It is assumed the character of Thales represents one of Johnson's friend Richard Savage who also moved to Wales.

There is a speaker in this poem who is waiting for his friend Thales in the bank of Thames river. Because Thales is going to leave London he wants to meet his friend. The speaker is feeling sad about the departure of his friend Thales but at the same time he supports his decision also. They both meet and they look together at the city for a while. After some time Thales reveals that why he has decided to leave the city of London. The reasons Thales says that-

- The whole political system of the England has become corrupted. London used to be a noble city once upon a time and there were such kings who were so brave and courageous like Edward and Henry. These former kings fought against the enemies of England and they brought victory also. There was another English king like Alfred the Great who was really a humble and inspiring personality. He was such a monarch who had a good control over the criminal rates of the country. During his reign there was only one jail in the half of the whole England. So Thales is remembering the golden past of

England and says that once upon a time the position of London was very high which has degraded now.

- Now a days London is full of criminals, people are hungry and the government is taking advantage of it. The leaders are becoming rich and they are collecting tax from the poor people. No one can roam freely for the fear of murder. Rapes and murders have become common in London. The leaders do not worry about any noble aim, they are just concern for money. Now London has become safe only for the people who have the power of money. It becomes difficult to survive in London for the common people.
- So Thales feels that because of the misguided culture the London city has become to a devastating stage. The government leaders and officials are responsible for this situation because they are concerned to increase their property by hook or by crook. Thales wants a life with honor, wisdom and kindness so he is moving to Wales to live a peaceful life. Thales says to his friend that there is a lot of things which he wants to say but time has come to leave and his boat has come in which he is going to Wales. He wishes that one day his friend will also leave London.