

NCERT Book Notes
Class 10th English (First Flight)

Chapter 10 – The Sermon at Benares

1. When her son dies, Kisa Gotami goes from house to house. What does she ask for? Does she get it? Why not?

Ans: When Kisa Gotami's kid died, she traveled from house to house, asking for medicine to cure her child. No, she did not receive it since her child had died and no amount of medicine could have revived him.

2. Kisa Gotami again goes from house to house after she speaks with the Buddha. What does she ask for, the second time around? Does she get it? Why not?

Ans: When she first encountered the Buddha, he instructed her to collect a handful of mustard seeds from a home where no one had lost a child, husband, father, or friend. She went from house to house looking for mustard seeds, but she couldn't find any because no one in the family had died.

3. What does Kisa Gotami understand the second time that she failed to understand the first time? Was this what the Buddha wanted her to understand?

Ans: The second time around, Kisa Gotami realized that death is universal and that she was being selfish in her mourning. There was no home where a loved one had not passed away. Yes, the Buddha intended for her to comprehend this.

4. Why do you think Kisa Gotami understood this only the second time? In what way did the Buddha change her understanding?

Ans: Kisa Gotami realized that death affects everyone and that her grieving was selfish. She only realized this the second time because she discovered that there was not a single home where someone she loved had not died. She was just thinking about her grief the first time around, so she asked for a treatment that would cure her son. She was ordered to fetch a handful of mustard seeds from a house where no one had died when she met the Buddha. He did this on purpose to show her that there isn't a single house without a deceased loved one and that death is a natural part of life. When she returned to all of the residences for the second time, she was disappointed that she had not been able to collect the mustard seeds. Then, as she sat and pondered the situation, she recognized that men's fate is such that they live and

die. Death is a fact of life for everyone. This was the message the Buddha wanted her to receive.

5. How do you usually understand the idea of ‘selfishness? Do you agree with Kisa Gotami that she was being ‘selfish in her grief’?

Ans: Selfishness is a concern with the words "I," "myself," and "mine." Kisa Gotami couldn't bear to think about other people's sorrows. It's natural to be saddened by the death of someone close to you. However, the majority of individuals continue to carry out their next duty, which is to perform proper last rituals for the deceased. People rarely carry a dead body in the belief that something miraculous will happen to it. In times of loss, family, and society always come to the aid of the bereaved. However, life carries on after that. Kisa Gotami, on the other hand, was so consumed by her grief that she forgot about the living members of her family and society.

6. This text is written in an old-fashioned style, for it reports an incident more than two millennia old. Look for the following words and phrases in the text, and try to rephrase them in the more current language, based on how you understand them.

Give thee medicine for thy child

Ans: Give you medicine for your child

Pray tell me

Please tell me

Kisa repaired to the Buddha

Kisa went to the Buddha

There was no house but someone had died in it

There was no house where no one had died

Kinsmen

Relatives

Mark!

Listen

7. You know that we can combine sentences using words like and, or, but, yet, and then. But sometimes no such word seems appropriate. In such a case ‘was’ can use a semicolon (;) or a dash (–) to combine two clauses.

She has no interest in music; I doubt she will become a singer like her mother. The second clause here gives the speaker’s opinion on the first clause.

Here is a sentence from the text that uses semicolons to combine clauses. Break up the sentence into three simple sentences. Can you then say which has a better

rhythm when you read it, the single sentence using semicolons, or the three simple sentences?

For there is not any means by which those who have been born can avoid dying; after reaching old age there is death; of such a nature are living beings.

Ans: The cadence of the single phrase with semicolons is superior. This is because the meanings of the three components of the statement are intertwined. The first clause is expanded upon in the second clause. The third clause is inextricably linked to the first and second clauses. When semicolons are used to connect them, their meanings are better expressed.