

Chapter Review

- 'The Sermon at Benares' is about Gautama Buddha's teachings on suffering, death and the way to peace.
- Gautama Buddha was born in the 6th century BC as Prince Siddhartha. He left his palace after seeing old age, sickness and death, and found enlightenment under the Bodhi tree.
- He gave his first sermon at Sarnath, near Benares (Varanasi), to five disciples. He preached the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path.
- Story of Kisa Gotami: Her only son died. In her grief, she carried the body, asking for medicine. A man said only the Buddha could help her.
- Buddha asked her to bring a handful of mustard seeds from a house where no one had died. Kisa Gotami went from door to door but found no house that had not lost someone.
- She understood that death comes to all, and her grief was not only hers. She buried her son and returned to the Buddha as a disciple.
- Buddha taught that life is full of sorrow and that everyone must die. Death is common to all. The only way to peace is to give up desire and attachment, and to find the truth.
- He said, 'The living are dead.' Not all that the dead leave behind belongs to them; hence cry not for that.
- Message: grief should be understood and not feared. The wise do not grieve, since death and change are natural.

Key Terms

Sermon – A religious speech.

Enlightenment – Understanding the truth of life.

Mustard seed – A tiny seed used in cooking.

Disciple – A follower and student of a teacher.

Sorrow – Deep sadness.

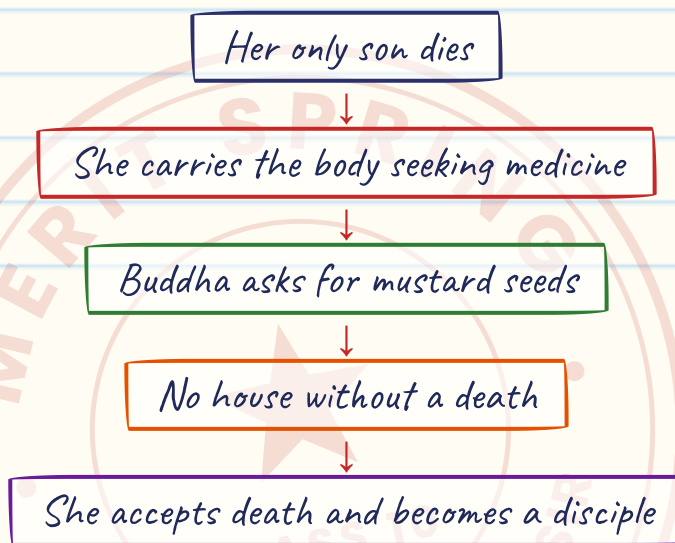
Mortal – Certain to die.

Nirvana – Final freedom from suffering.

Bodhi tree – The tree under which Buddha attained enlightenment.

Diagrams / Flowcharts

Kisa Gotami's Search



Buddha's Main Teachings

- Four Noble Truths: life has suffering; suffering has a cause (desire); it can end; and there is a path to end it.
- Eightfold Path: right view, thought, speech, action, livelihood, effort, mindfulness and concentration.
- Compassion, non-violence and the Middle Path are key values.

Textbook Exercise Questions

Q.1 Why was Kisa Gotami so sad?

Ans. Her only son died. She was so heartbroken that she carried his body, thinking he could be cured.

Q.2 What did Buddha ask her to bring?

Ans. A handful of mustard seeds from a house where no one had ever died.

Q.3 Why could she not get the mustard seeds?

Ans. Every house she visited had lost a parent, child or relative. Nobody could say no one had died.

Q.4 What did Kisa Gotami realise?

Ans. She realised that death is common to all, and that she was not alone in her suffering.

Q.5 What did Buddha mean by 'The living are few in number compared to the dead'?

Ans. Death is the universal fate. All living beings die in the end, so we must not grieve beyond measure.

Q.6 What is the best way to overcome grief?

Ans. Accept the truth of death and change, give up attachment and show compassion to others.

Board Exam Questions (Important)

Q.1 How did Buddha console Kisa Gotami? What does it teach us?

Ans. He did not tell her not to grieve; he made her see through experience that death is universal. It teaches that understanding and acceptance can ease sorrow.

Q.2 Why is the mustard seed episode important?

Ans. It is a clever way of teaching a lesson without preaching. Kisa Gotami learns for herself and so her change is lasting.

Q.3 Value-based: What can we learn from the Buddha's sermon?

Ans. Life is short, and loss is natural. We should live with kindness and treat others with compassion.

