
SUMMARY OF THE LESSON

The narrator was a fifth standard school boy. One day he went to school with four rupees in his pocket. He was to pay his school fees. But, Ghulam Mohammed who collected the fees, was absent.

All through the day the coins simply sat in his pocket. But once he walked out of school, they began to jingle. One coin actually spoke to him to eat the hot, syrupy and fresh jalebis. Money was meant to be spent. But the boy hesitated to spend his fees money. He knew how strict his class teacher was.

But the coins were not convinced. They began to speak at the same time. The boy grabbed all four of them tight in his fist. As soon as he loosened his grip, the oldest coin asked him if he didn't feel like eating jalebis. And then he was to get his scholarship money of four rupees the next day. He could easily pay the fees.

The boy's mouth watered. But still he dared not to buy the jalebis. He was brilliant in studies. He came of a well-to-do family also. It wasn't right for him to eat jalebis in the middle of the bazaar. The coins did not give in. They persuaded the boy. They were so keen on being spent that day. The boy returned home and went inside for lunch. He wanted to control his desire for jalebis. But finally he surrendered. He ran to the sweetmeat seller and bought them worth a rupee. He got quite a lot of them.

Seeing his uncle returning from court, the boy ran into a lane. He ate as many jalebis as he could. Soon the boys from the neighbourhood surrounded him. He started distributing them among the children. He spent the remaining three rupees also on jalebis and handed them out to the children. He then washed his hands and mouth. He returned home. He felt it was difficult to

digest such a lot. All night he suffered stomachache. In the morning he was all right and headed for school. He faced another problem. The scholarship was to be paid the following month. His head began to spin. When the recess bell rang, he left the school and reached the railway station. He was sad and scared. Had he known about the delay in the payment of scholarship money, he would have never spent the amount on jalebis.

Spending fee amount on jalebis is now becoming heavy on him. He thought of the teacher's cane. He began to pray. He recited the entire *Namaz* to please God. He felt sorry and appealed to God to send him four rupees. But all his plans misfired. *Allah Miyan* showed no mercy. One day he was caught. The report of his absence from school had reached home. It took him several years to realise that God helps those who help themselves. God doesn't give anything if one asks for it. One should be careful about one's behaviour.

TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED

COMPREHENSION CHECK

(Page 65)

1. Why didn't he pay the school fees on the day he brought money to school?

Ans. The boy couldn't pay the school fees on the day he brought to school because the teacher Master Ghulam Mohammed was on leave.

2. (i) What were the coins 'saying' to him?

(ii) Do you think they were misguiding him?

Ans. (i) The coins in the boy's pocket urged him to buy hot and fresh jalebis.

(ii) Yes, the coins were misguiding him because the money was meant for paying school fees.

3. Why didn't he take the coin's advice? Give two or three reasons.

Ans. Initially, the boy didn't take the advice of the coins seriously for a couple of reasons. He could not spend the money meant for paying school fees on jalebis. Secondly, the boy knew the harsh nature of the master and the punishment.

4. (i) What did the oldest coin tell him?

(ii) Did he follow his advice? If not, why not?

Ans. (i) The oldest coin convinced him that they were telling him for his own good. He can pay his fee next day with his scholarship money. So he should not suppress his desire for jalebis.

(ii) He didn't follow his advice. He was a promising student. He was from a good family of repute. He didn't want to get defame for it.

5. He reached home with the coins in his pocket. What happened then?

Ans. After reaching home he couldn't suppress his temptation for fresh Jalabis. He rushed to the shop of halwai. He bought jalebis and enjoyed them.

COMPREHENSION CHECK

(Page 68)

1. (i) Why didn't he eat all the jalebis he had bought?

(ii) What did he do with the remaining jalebis?

Ans. (i) He had bought jalebis for one rupee. But he couldn't eat all of them because of their quantity.

(ii) He distributed the remaining jalebis among the boys from the neighbourhood.

2. "The fear was killing me." What was the fear?

Ans. He had eaten so many jalebis that there was the problem of digesting them all. His fear was that one jalebi or two would come out with a burp.

3. "Children's stomachs are like digestion machines." What do you understand by that? Do you agree?

Ans. It means that children have the capacity to digest a lot of things that they overeat. I agree with the statement but only partly.

4. How did he plan to pay the fees the next day?

Ans. He planned to pay the fees the next day when he would get his monthly scholarship.

5. When it is time to pay the fees, what does he do? How is he disobeying the elders by doing so?

Ans. When the time draws near to pay the fees, he tucked the bag under his arm and slips out of the school. He had disobeyed his elders by crossing the railway track.

COMPREHENSION CHECK

(Page 72)

1. What was the consequence of buying jalebis with the fees money?

Ans. As a result of spending his fees money on jalebis, he had to be absent from school for the first time in his life.

2. His prayer to God is like a lawyer's defence of a bad case. Does he argue his case well? What are the points he makes?

Ans. He tries to please God with his requests and the recitation of the entire *Namaz*. He admits that he made a mistake. He wouldn't have spent his money on jalebis if he had known about the delay in scholarship. Thus, he argues his case like a lawyer.

3. He offers to play a game with Allah Miyan. What is the game?

Ans. The game is that he will go upto the signal, touch it and come back. And in the meantime God should put four rupees under a big rock.

4. Did he get four rupees by playing the game? What did he get to see under the rock?

Ans. No, he didn't get four rupees by playing the game. When he lifted the rock, he saw a worm instead of coins.

5. If God had granted his wish that day, what harm would it have caused him in later life?

Ans. If God had granted his wish that day he wouldn't have learnt a lesson to do no wrong in future. He would have been like a bird and learnt no skill.

EXERCISE

(Page 72)

Work in small groups.

1. Select and read sentences that show

- (a) that the boy is tempted to eat jalebis.
- (d) that he is feeling guilty
- (c) that he is justifying a wrong deed.

Ans. (a) • *Jalebis* are meant to be eaten, and those with money in their pocket can eat them.

• But then, these jalebis are no common sort of *Jalebis* either. They're crisp, fresh and full of syrup.

• My mouth watered. I rushed out of the house bare foot and ran towards the bazaar.

(b) • My head started to spin.

• When the recess bell rang I tucked my bag under my arm and left the school.

• Now for the crime of eating a few *Jalebis*, for the first time in my life I was absent from school.

• Sitting under a tree, at first I felt like crying.

(c) • I didn't eat them all by myself, and I fed them to a whole lot of children.

• *Allah Miyan!* I am a good boy. I have memorised the entire *namaz* and the last ten *surats* of the *Quran* by heart.

2. Discuss the following points:

(a) Is the boy intelligent? If so, what is the evidence of it?

(b) Does his outlook on the jalebis episode change after class VIII? Does he see that episode in a new light?

(c) Why are coins made to 'talk' in this story? What purpose does it serve?

Ans. (a) The boy is definitely intelligent. The first evidence is that he has won a scholarship. He is a promising boy. He knows what is right and what is wrong. He argues his case before God like a lawyer.

(b) Yes, his outlook changed after class VIII. He later realised that nothing comes without a price. If God were to grant all one's wishes for the asking, man would not learn any skill. He would be no better than birds.

(c) The coins are made to talk because they reflect the conflict going on in his own mind.