



Grade VI

Lesson 9. What Happened to the Reptiles

Supplementary Reader

Summary of the chapter

People in Prem's Village Fought in the Name of Religion

There are many kinds of people in the village. They speak many languages. Some pray in a temple and some in a mosque. The people went mad, burning temples and mosques. They fought with one another. Many people fled from the village, including Prem. His house was also burnt in the fire. He took his clothes, some coins and his little Ganesh statue and ran away.

Prem Reached Pambupatti

As soon as Prem reached Pambupatti, he fainted near a well. He later found himself in a house of an old man with white hair and heard. The old man took care of Prem and neighbours came to see him. Prem asked the old man how could people of this village are so friendly and good with each other. He said that people in his village fought in the name of religion.

The Old Man told Prem the story of Pambupatti

The old man told Prem that he could tell this story to his villagers. May be the story can heal their wounds. But Prem does not want to return to his village. The old man started his story and said there were no schools and teachers long back. People used to live in caves and eat fruits and berries from the forest. There were only reptiles in Pambupatti forest.

The Reptiles had a Meeting Every Month

Everyone used to come in the meeting like tortoises, liards, crocodiles etc. The president of these meetings was Makara, the biggest crocodile of the forest. All the animals gave give importance as he was powerful and strong. All the animals followed what Makara says.

Makara sent a letter to tortoises not to come in the meeting. Ahistay, the big old star tortoise was very angry. None of the tortoises had the courage to attend the meeting. Makara announced in the meeting that he wanted all the tortoises to leave the forest and move out of Pambupatti. All the tortoises have been given one week time to leave the forest because they



were very slow. Makara said there will be more food water, space in the forest if tortoises leave the forest.

A Strange Smell began to Fill the Forest

After the tortoises left the forest, the smell of rotting fruits and animals filled the forest. These were the food of the tortoises which were now not used in their absence. Even Makara was fed with the smell.

Makara Wrote a letter to Snakes to Leave the Forest

After a month, Makara wrote a letter to the snakes to leave the forest in a day. Naga, the head of the snakes wanted more time but Makara declined his plea. Makara said the snakes were slimy and make funny noises, so they have to leave the forest. No one dared to oppose Makara and the snakes left. After a few weeks, the number of rats in the forest increases in the absence of snakes. The rats had taken over the forest. They ate up the eggs of the lizards and crocodiles. Makara's own nest of eggs had been destroyed.

Makara Ordered Lizards to Leave the Forest

Makara did not like lizards as they have a strange habit to change their colours and ordered them to leave the forest. The lizards left the forest with their babies on their backs.

Life becomes Awful in Pambupatti

Rats grew bolder and became fearless. The number of frogs increased and there was no one to eat them in the forest. The number of insects rose in the absence of lizards. It was a terrible time for the crocodile. They could not understand what had happened to their forest. All the reptiles such as tortoises, snakes, lizards etc came back to Pambupatti with their families. In two months, the forest was back to normal. The rats, insects and the smell disappeared.

The Old Man told Prem to Spread a Message

The old man told Prem to convey a message to more and more people in his village that the world belongs to everyone. Each one of us has a place in this world. They may laugh over it but will realise the truth later.



NCERT Folder

1. In what way is Pambupatti different from any other village?

Peopel in other villages clashed with one another in the name of religion, while peopel in Pambupatti lived in peace. They did not fight over religion or language, therefore Pambupatti was different from other villages.

2. Why is Prem determind not to return to his village?

Prem left his village because people fought in the name of religion and burnt temples and mosques. They went mad and started fighting with one another. He witnessed violence in the village and decided not to return to his village.

3. Why did Makara dislike tortoises, snakes and lizards? Write a line about each.

Makara disliked tortoises because they were slow and stupid. They carry their houses on their backs. He disliked snakes because they were simy and made funny noises. Makara hated lizards because they change colours and he could not trust them.

4. What went wrong when the tortoises, snakes and liards left the forest?

It was a terrible time in the forest. The forest got filled with foul smell of rotting fruits and fishes in the absence of tortoises. Rats multiplied and had taken over the forest in the absence of snakes. The number of insects increased of snakes. The number of insects increased in the absence of lizards.

5. Why do you think Prem wants to tell the story of the reptiles to the people of his village?

Prem wanted to tell the story of the reptiles to the people of his village to make them realise the importance of living together. People in his village fought over religion and burnt temples and mosques. Prem wanted to give them a message of peace and non-violence through his story.

6. Do you agree that it is difficult not to go along with someone who is very strong and powerful? Express your views frankly and clearly.

Yes, it is difficult not to go along with someone who is very strong and powerful. Common men live in constant fear of the strong and powerful people.

It is human tendency to follow the decision of strong and powerful people. but there are also people who oppose such people and fight with them when need arises.



7. If you were a baby crocodile, would you tell Makara that he was wrong? What would you say to convince him?

Yes, if I would have been a baby crocodile, I would have advised my father Makara not to do wrong with anyone as the forest belongs to all reptiles irrespective of their strength and size.

I would have told him that God has given the right to everyone to live peacefully and with dignity. I would have told that instead of harassing the weaker animals, Makara should protect them.

Chapter Practice

Very Short Answer Type Questions

1. Why did Prem leave his village?

Prem left his village because of violence. People fought with each other and burnt temples and mosques over religion. His house was also burnt in the communal violence.

2. Who was Makara?

Makara was the President of the meetings. He was the biggest crocodile in the forest. Everyone obeys his order as he was strong and powerful.

3. Who all lived in the Pambupatti forest?

All kinds of reptiles such as snakes, crocodiles, turtles, lizards etc live in the Pambupatti forest.

4. What are reptiles?

Reptiles are creatures with scales all over their bodies. They lay eggs. Crocodiles, snakes, turtles, lizards etc are reptiles.

5. Who was Ahistay?

Ahistay was the big star tortoise with black and yellow picture on his shell. He was very angry over Makara's decision to throw out all the tortoises.

6. How did Makara prepare himself for the meeting?

Before the meeting, Makara polished his teeth with red flower of the tree by the river till they sparkled.



7. Who was Naga? What was his request?

Naga was the head of the snakes in the forest. He pleaded to Makara to give all the snakes more time to leave the forest.

8. What do you mean by 'the forest was back to normal'?

The forest was back to normal meant that the rats, insects and the smell disappeared from the forest. All the reptiles returned to the forest.

9. Why did Prem want to return to his village?

Prem wanted to return to tell the villagers a story and teach them a lesson of non-violence and peace.

Short Answer Type Questions

1. How did the old man take care of Prem?

The old man looked after Prem, putting food in his mouth and bringing him sweets and cold water from the stream.

2. Why did Makara made the tortoises leave the forest?

Makara made the tortoises leave the forest because they were slow and stupid. According to Makara, the tortoises carry their houses on their backs. He said the tortoises were slowcoaches and gave them a week time to leave the forest.

3. What happened after a month when the tortoises left the forest?

After a month, Makara wrote a letter to snakes. The snakes have to leave the forest because they were slimy and made funny noises.

Since they were fast, they were given one-day time to leave the forest along with their families.

4. How did rats have a wonderful time?

The rats had a wonderful time because they grew in number as they were no snakes in the forest to eat them up. They ate up the eggs of the lizards and crocodiles in the forest. The rats also destroyed Makara's nest, containing his eggs.

5. How those creatures return to Pambupatti?

All the crocodile realised that their happiness lay in their fellow creatures' happiness and homecoming, so they sent urgent messages all over the place for the tortoises, snakes and lizards to come back to the Pambupatti forest. They all returned thereafter.



Long Answer Type Questions

1. How did Makara harass other reptiles in the forest?

All the animals in the forest were scared of Makara because it was powerful and strong. The animals follow what Makara says and nobody has the guts to oppose him. That's why nobody objected when Makara sent a letter to tortoises not to come in the meeting and leave the forest. Makara later wrote a letter to the snakes to leave the forest in a day. All the animals were aware that it was injustice, but nobody could oppose it. No one dared to oppose Makara and the snakes left the forest.

Makara never realised his mistake and shouted when somebody tried to intervene. Makara even told the lizards to leave the forest on short notice.

2. How did Prem meet the old man in Pambupatti?

Prem lived in a village closed to a forest. People in his village fought in the name of religion and went mad, burning temples and mosques. Many people fled from the village, including Prem.

His house was also burnt in the fire. He took his clothes, some coins and his little Ganesh statue and ran away. He jumped on to a train without tickets.

Prem reached Pambupatti and fainted near a well. He later found himself in a house of an old man with white hair and beard.

The old man took care of Prem and provided him food, water and shelter. The old man told him a story about Pambupatti.

3. Why did the old man narrate a story to Prem?

Prem fainted after he reached Pambupatti. He found himself in a house of an old man. The old man looked after him, putting food in his mouth, bringing him sweet, cold water from the stream.

Neighbours as well as strangers came to see him. Prem asked the old man the reason behind such generosity. He asked how could people of his village be so friendly and good with each other.

He said that people in his village fought in the name of religion. The old man told a story to Prem to make him realise the importance of peace and non-violence. Maybe the story can heal their wounds and bring people together.

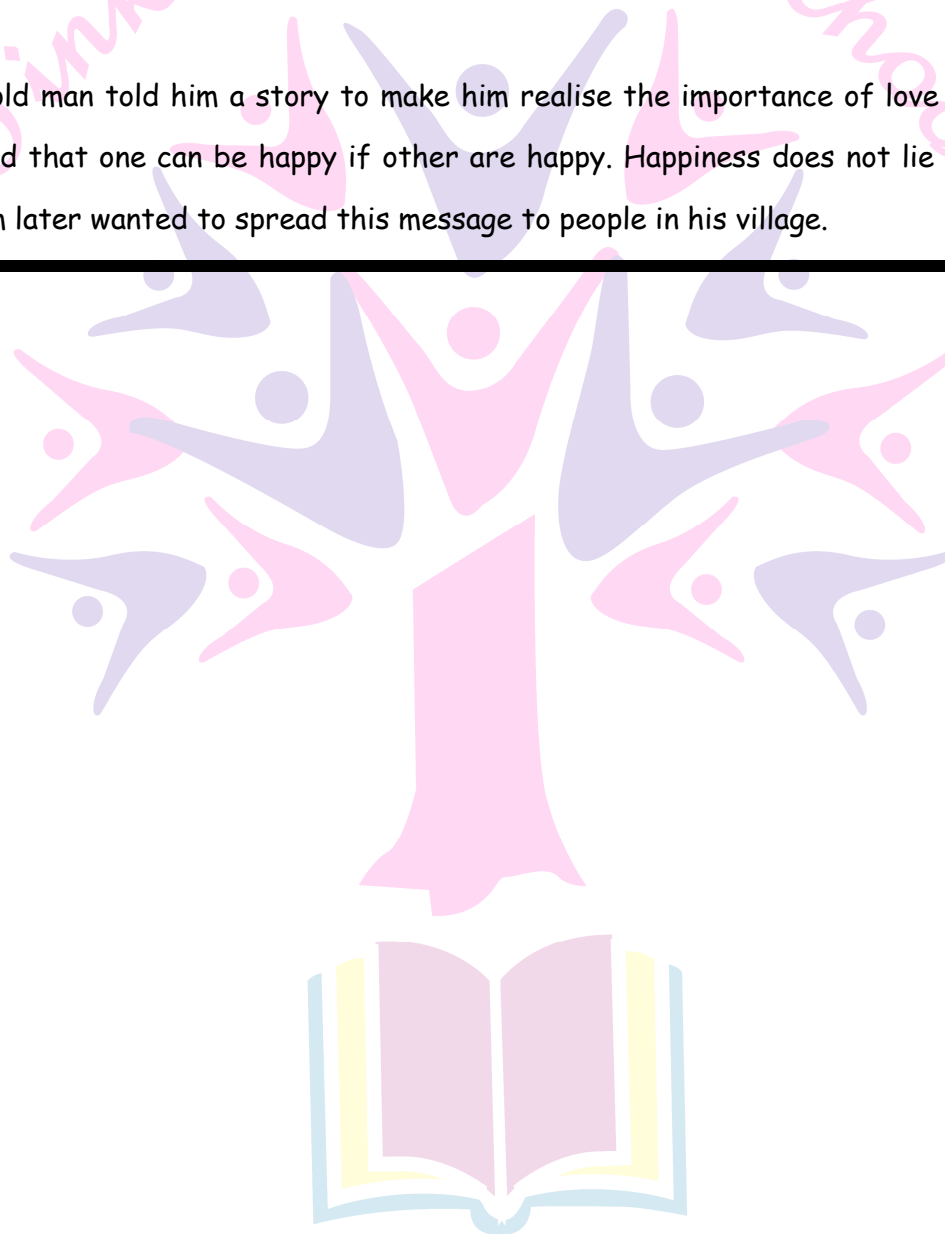


Value Based Question

1. What is the underlying message hidden in the story 'What happened to the reptiles'?

Prem ran away from his village after a communal violence broke out in his village. People fought with one another and burnt temples and mosques. Prem reached Pambupatti and fainted. An old man took care of him. Prem realised that people in Pambupatti were generous and friendly. Neighbours as well as strangers came to see him. He wanted to know the reason behind it.

The old man told him a story to make him realise the importance of love and happiness. Prem realised that one can be happy if other are happy. Happiness does not lie in violence and hatred. Prem later wanted to spread this message to people in his village.



Next Generation School