

Chapter 6: New Questions and Ideas

Intext Questions:

Question 1. What was the language used to compose the Vedas?

Answer: Sanskrit was used to compose the Vedas.

Question 2. What was the Buddha trying to teach the sorrowing mother?

Answer: Buddha was trying to tell the sorrowing mother that death will come to all. No one can escape death.

Question 3. How did the beggar convince the sages to share their food with him?

Answer: The beggar told the sages that when universal soul fills the whole world, it fills him too as he is the part of the universe. By not giving him food, the sages are actually denying food to the universal soul. Hence, the sages realised the truth of what the beggar said, and shared their food with him.

Question 4. Why do you think the term Jina was used for Mahavira?

Answer: The term Jina used for Mahavira because at the age of 42 he attained the highest spiritual knowledge. Therefore, he is called the Jina or Conqueror of Self.

Question 5. List at least two ways in which the sangha described in this lesson was different from the one mentioned in Chapter 5. Were there any similarities?

Answer: The differences between the sanghas described in the chapter 5 and chapter 6 were-

1. Sangam in chapter 5 was a form of government in Vaishali (Bihar). Sangham in chapter 6 was an association of those who left their homes. According to Buddha and Mahavira, true knowledge can be gained only after people left their homes.
2. There were many rules in the sangha in chapter 5. They met frequently to discuss and debate the questions relating to the state. In Sanghas of chapter 6, men and women who joined sangha had to lead simple lives. They meditated for most of the time and went to cities and villages to beg for food.

Similarities between both the Sanghas were: In Sanghas of chapter 5, women, slaves and Kammakaras could not participate in these assemblies. In Sanghas of chapter 6, to join Sanghas women, children had to take the permission of their parents and husbands respectively.

Question 6. In what way was the system of ashramas different from life in the sangha? What are the varnas mentioned here? Were all four varnas allowed to participate in the system of ashramas?

Answer:

Sangha	Arharm
In the sangha, all people were allowed to join, whether women or slaves. They had to take permission from their parents, husbands, or masters respectively.	Only brahmins, Kshatriya, and vaishyas were expected to follow the ashramas. Shares were not allowed. Women had to follow the ashram of their husbands
The members were expected to lead a life of celibacy once they joined the sangha.	One of the ashramas was the grihastha ashram-t when they had to marry and live as a householder
The members had to be on the move, preaching and teaching the people, except during the rainy season.	The first two ashramas, the brahmacharya, and grihastha were spent at home.

Sangha	Arharm
The members had to go out and beg for food.	They lived in the family for the first two stages and there was no need to beg.

The four varnas are the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas The fourth were the Shudras. Only Brahmin, Kshatriya, and Vais'nya men were expected to follow the ashramas.

Imagine

Question: You want to go to listen to one of the preachers who lived about 2500 years ago. Describe your conversation with your parents as you try to persuade them to let you go.

Answer:

I: Father, I wish to listen to the sermons which will be delivered by Lord Mahavira.

Father: You are too young to hear religious discourses.

I: But father he does not give religious sermons. He mainly tells about the way of life.

Father: If you are so keen to hear him, tell me one thing about him.

I: I know that he tells about ahimsa or non-injury. We should kill any animal for food. I want to know more about him. Father, have you not heard the pitiful cries of the animals when they are killed.

Father: If my child you are so keen to go then we will go with you.

Let's recall

Question 1. Describe the ways in which the Buddha tried to spread his message to the people.

Answer: The Buddha preached about life being full of suffering and unhappiness. He spoke of 'tanha' the desire to have more. He taught about 'Karma' our actions which affect us in the current life and also in the later lives. He taught people to be kind and to respect the lives of others. He used the language of the ordinary people, Prakrit, to talk to them.

Question 2. Write whether true or false:

- The Buddha encouraged animal sacrifices.
- Sarnath is important because it was the place where the Buddha taught for the first time.
- The Buddha taught that karma has no effect on our lives.
- The Buddha attained enlightenment at Bodh Gaya.
- Upanishadic thinkers believed that the atman and brahman were ultimately one.

Answer:

- False
- True
- False
- True
- True

Question 3. What were the questions that Upanishadic thinkers wanted to answer?

Answer:

- Some of them wanted to know about life after death, others wanted to know why sacrifices should be performed.
- Many Upanishadic thinkers felt that there was something permanent in the world, something that would last even after death. They described this as the atman or the individual soul and the brahman or the universal soul. They believed that ultimately, both the atman and the brahman were one.

Question 4. What were the main teachings of the Mahavira?

Answer: The main teachings of Mahavira are :

1. He taught a simple derive: men and women who wished to know the truth must leave their homes.
2. They must strictly follow the rules of ahimsa, which means not, hurting, or killing living beings.
3. To all things life is dear.

Let's discuss

Question 5. Why do you think Anagha's mother wanted her to know the story of the Buddha?

Answer: We think that Anagha's mother wanted her to know the story of the Buddha because the story of the Buddha would tell her about Buddha's life as well as about his teachings and ideas.

Question 6. Do you think it would have been easy for slaves to join the sangha? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer: Those who wanted to join the sangha had to take permission from their parents or their masters. If the slave wanted to join the sangha, they had to take the permission of their masters. The masters would not give permission easily, because the slaves worked very hard and did not get any wages. So it was difficult for the islands to join the sangha.

Let's do

Question 7. Make a list of at least five ideas and questions mentioned in this lesson. Choose three from the list and discuss why you think that they are important even today.

Answer: A list of five ideas and questions mentioned in the lesson:

1. What is the true meaning of life?
2. Why life is full of suffering and unhappiness?
3. What is Ahimsa or Non-violence? Why is it important even today?
4. What is the relation between atman and brahman?
5. Why should we lead a simple life and why should we be honest in our life?

Selection and discussion of three ideas and questions mentioned in the above list:

1. What is the true meaning of life?

Answer: It is very important even today to know the true meaning of life. Because this idea will make us truthful. We will lead a simple life. A simple way of life takes us towards honesty and makes us peaceful. This way of life also takes us nearer to God or Brahma.

2. Why life is full of suffering and unhappiness?

Answer: Gautam, the Buddha taught us that worldly life is full of suffering and unhappiness. This is caused because we have cravings and desires (which generally cannot be fulfilled). Sometimes, even if we get what we desire, we are not satisfied and want even more (or other things). This is tanha or Trishna or thirst. This craving could be removed by the following moderation in everything.

3. What is Ahimsa or Non-violence? Why is it important even today?

Answer: Ahimsa or Non-violence's word meaning is not killing any other living person, creature, cattle, or insect. Ahimsa is useful even today. It makes us kind and teaches us to respect the lives of others, including animals.

Question 8. Find out more about men and women who renounce the world today. Where do they live, what kinds of clothes do they wear, and what do they eat? Why do they renounce the world?

Answer: Religious saints, monks, nuns, philosophers, jainmunnies (men as well as women), men and women who have joined the Buddha- Sangha renounce the world even today.

They live in ashrams, vihars, sanghas, dargah as or lonely places of meditation or worship. Some of them even live in remote forests or near some permanent rivers or on the peak of mountains. They meditate most of the time. They wear very simple clothes or clothes of particular colour and design.

Generally, they eat vegetarian food, simple rice or chapatis along with milk, fruit, vegetables, and pulses. They renounce the world because they feel that only those who leave their homes can gain true knowledge.

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