

ENGLISH

CHAPTER 4: IN THE KINGDOM OF FOOLS



IN THE KINGDOM OF FOOLS

~Summary~

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Stupid Order Followed in the Kingdom of Fools

The king and his minister in the Kingdom of Fools were stupid. They ordered that night should be treated as day and all the people should work at that time. They should go to bed as soon as the day broke. The orders were followed by the people under the fear of being put to death if not followed. This delighted the king and the minister.

Guru Visits the Kingdom Alongwith his Disciple

Once a guru and his disciple came to the kingdom during the day, finding it beautiful but totally deserted. Everyone, including the animals, was asleep. They were tired and hungry but could not get anything to eat till the evening, when the whole place woke up and came to life. When the guru and disciple bought some food items, they surprisingly found that everything, whether it was a bunch of bananas or a measure of rice, cost the same, one duddu, the local currency.

Guru Leaves the City But the Disciple Remains in the City

The wise guru realised that they were in a Kingdom of Fools and it would not be safe to stay there. So, he suggested his disciple that they should leave the place at once. But, the disciple was fond of food and found it very cheap to stay on. The guru left. Soon the disciple grew very fat by eating to his fill.

Incident of Theft in Rich Merchant's House

One day, a thief broke into the house of a rich merchant to steal his valuables by breaking a wall. But, as he was going out with the stolen stuff, the old wall fell on him and killed him. The brother of the thief complained before the king that the owner of the house was to be blamed for the death and demanded justice. The king heard the case and the merchant was found guilty because his house's wall collapsed and killed the thief.

The Blame Game Continued

The merchant blamed the bricklayer who built the wall, as it was thought that his bad workmanship created a weak wall. But, the bricklayer blamed the dancer who distracted him when he was making the wall by passing in front of him a dozen times during the day, resulting in poor quality of the wall.

The dancer accused the goldsmith who called the dancer time and again to deliver the jewellery she had asked to be made, but did not deliver it, leading to the distraction of the bricklayer.

The goldsmith blamed the merchant's father, as he had been making the urgent jewellery for him, thus delaying the finishing of the dancer's jewellery. As the father was dead, the merchant was finally pronounced guilty, as he had inherited all the wealth as well as the bad deeds of his father.

Disciple Fell in Trouble and Guru Tricked to Save Him

A new stake was built for the execution but the merchant was too thin to fit the stake. So, the king ordered to search for a fatter man to fit the stake and the disciple was brought for execution. Then, he remembered his guru's words and wished that the guru was there. As the guru had magical powers, he appeared at once and explained a plan quietly to the disciple to escape the execution.

The guru and his disciple started fighting amongst themselves to decide who should be executed first. When the king asked them why they were fighting, the guru explained that the new stake was the stake of the God of Justice and whoever was executed first on it would be reborn as a king. Whoever was executed next on that stake would be reborn as a minister.

The King and Ministers Die

The puzzled king believing what the guru said, discussed the matter with his minister and decided that if they themselves were executed on that stake first, they would be reborn as king and minister. So they freed the guru and disciple, secretly planning to die on the stake the same night.

Guru and Disciple Become King and Minister

The dead bodies of king and minister were taken down. The people mourned their deaths and requested the guru and his disciple to become the king and minister of the kingdom. The guru and disciple agreed on the condition that they would change all the laws back to the normal laws of any other kingdom.

Conclusion of In the Kingdom of Fools

The chapter – In the Kingdom of Fools illustrates that we should stay away from foolish people otherwise we may end up suffering or may fall into trouble for such people. Besides, foolish people need to be dealt with wisdom rather than logic.

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NCERT SOLUTIONS

Questions (Page No. 27)

(Think about it)

Question 1. What are the two strange things the guru and his disciple find in the Kingdom of Fools?

Answer: The two strange things the guru and his disciple found in the Kingdom of Fools are:

- Everyone sleeps during the day and does work and other regular chores at night.
- Everything costs the same- one duddu i.e. one rupee, whether one buys a measure of rice or a bunch of bananas, it cost a duddu.

Question 2. Why does the disciple decide to stay in the Kingdom of Fools? Is it a good idea?

Answer: The disciple decides to stay in the Kingdom of Fools because everything was cheap in that kingdom. He wanted to have good, cheap food.

No, it was not a good idea. The guru even warned the disciple that it was the Kingdom of Fools and it wouldn't last very long. He said that one can't tell what the people of this kingdom would do next.

Question 3. Name all the people who are tried in the king's court, and give the reasons for their trial.

Answer: The people who are tried in the king's court are: the merchant, the bricklayer, the dancing girl, the goldsmith and the merchant (second time).

The merchant was tried because the burglar died when the wall of the merchant's house fell on him.

The bricklayer was tried because he was the one who built the wall so weak that it fell upon and killed the burglar.

The dancing girl was tried because she distracted the bricklayer by walking up and down on the road with jingling anklets while he was building up the wall.

The goldsmith was tried because he did not complete the jewelry orders given by the dancing girl and that's why she had to go numerous times to check if the order was ready.

The merchant was tried again because the goldsmith could not work on the dancing girl's orders as he was completely occupied with the jewelry order of the merchant's father. As the merchant's father was dead, the merchant was the one to be punished.

Question 4. Who is the real culprit according to the king? Why does he escape punishment?

Answer: The real culprit according to the king was the merchant himself. Although the merchant's father was the one to be blamed, the person to be held punishable was the merchant as the merchant's father was already dead and someone had to be punished for the crime.

He escapes punishment because he was too thin to be executed on the stake.

Question 5. What are the Guru's words of wisdom? When does the disciple remember them?

Answer: The Guru's words of wisdom were: "This is a city of fools. You don't know what they will do next."

The disciple remembers them when he is ordered to be executed without committing any crime. He was to be executed on the stake, the reason being that he was fat enough to be executed on the stake.

Question 6. How does the guru manage to save his disciple's life?

Answer: The guru tells the king that he wants to get executed first. Surprised at the wish of getting executed, the king expresses his desire to know the reason.

The guru responds that that stake is the stake of the God of justice. It's new, it has never had a criminal on it. So, whoever dies on it first will be reborn as the king of this country. And whoever goes next will be the future minister of this country.

The foolish king wants to avail this opportunity. He tells his minister that they should not let their kingdom go into hands of others in the next life. They decide to go on the stake themselves thinking that they would be reborn as the king and the minister of the kingdom. They release the guru and the disciple. That's how the guru manages to save his disciple's life.