

Chapter 8 – The Sermon at Benares

🖋️ Based on the life of Gautama Buddha

This chapter shares a key episode from the life of **Gautama Buddha**, focusing on how he attained enlightenment and delivered a **powerful message about life, death, and detachment**.

🧘 Main Character: **Gautama Buddha**

☀️ Character Traits

- 🧠 **Wise** – Seeks truth beyond worldly pleasures
- 🕊️ **Peaceful** – Calm and composed, even in serious matters
- 🙏 **Compassionate** – Helps others overcome suffering
- 🚶 **Spiritual Seeker** – Renounces royal life to find deeper meaning
- 💡 **Enlightened** – Realizes that death is a part of life

📈 Character Arc – Gautama Buddha

Stage	Transformation
👑 Prince Siddhartha	Lived in luxury, unaware of human suffering
😞 Witness to Death	Shocked after seeing sickness, old age, and death
🚶 Renunciation	Leaves palace to find the cause and cure of sorrow
🌳 Enlightenment	Meditates under a Bodhi tree and finds truth
🗣️ Spiritual Guide	Preaches detachment and understanding of suffering

📌 Detailed Summary – With Explanation

1 Early Life of Buddha

- Born as **Siddhartha Gautama**, a prince in northern India in a royal family (563 B.C.).
- Lived a life of **luxury**, unaware of pain or sorrow.

2 The Turning Point

- At age 25, he saw:
 - An **old man**
 - A **sick person**
 - A **dead body**
- These changed his thinking — he realised **life is full of suffering**.

3 His Search for Truth

- Renounced the palace, family, and wealth to become a **monk** 🧘
- Wandered for years, seeking the **truth of life**.

4 Enlightenment at Bodh Gaya

- Sat under a **peepal tree** (Bodhi tree) and meditated.
- After deep reflection, attained **enlightenment** — became the **Buddha** ("The Awakened One").

5 The Sermon at Benares

- Gave his first sermon at **Benares (Varanasi)** — a sacred city.
- Taught that:
 - Life is full of suffering and death is inevitable.
 - Wise people **don't grieve**, because it leads to more suffering.
 - The path to peace is through **detachment** and **acceptance**.

💔 Kisa Gotami's Story (Used in the Sermon)

👩 Who Was She?

- A woman whose **only son died**.
- She went from house to house asking for medicine to bring her son back.

🌿 What Did Buddha Say?


- He asked her to bring a **mustard seed** from a house where **no one had died**.
- She couldn't find any such house — everyone had experienced death.

🧠 What Did She Realise?

- Death is **universal**; no one escapes it.
- She **understood Buddha's message** — grief is pointless.
- Finally, she **accepted the truth**, left behind sorrow, and became Buddha's follower.


💡 Moral / Message of the Chapter

- 🧘 Death is a **natural part of life**.
- 🙏 Suffering ends when we **accept reality** and avoid attachment.
- 🔥 **Detachment** leads to peace and wisdom.

-  Pain is inevitable, but **grief is optional**.

Exam-Oriented Q&A Practice

1. Why did Buddha give the example of Kisa Gotami?

 To show that grief touches everyone, and accepting death is part of wisdom.

2. What did Kisa Gotami learn?

 That no house is free from death — it's universal.





3. What was Buddha's main teaching in the sermon?

 That sorrow and grief arise from attachment, and peace comes from detachment.

4. Why is the Bodhi tree important?

 Because under it, Buddha gained enlightenment 

New Words & Meanings

Word	Meaning	Emoji
Enlightenment	Spiritual awakening, full wisdom	
Renounce	To give up (especially worldly life)	
Detachment	Letting go of emotional bonds	
Grief	Deep sorrow, usually after death	
Universal	Something true for everyone	