

## *Chapter 14*

### *Stealing and Atonement*

1) Gandhiji and his friend smoked cigarette stubs and stalks of some plants. Do you think they were right in doing so? Give your opinion.

2) Read the passage given below and try to answer the following questions:

I have still to relate some of my failings during this meat-eating period and also previous to it, which date from before my marriage or soon after. A relative and I became fond of smoking. Not that we saw any good in smoking, or were enamoured of the smell of a cigarette. We simply imagined a sort of pleasure in emitting clouds of smoke from our mouths. My uncle had the habit, and when we saw him smoking, we thought we should copy his example. But we had no money. So we began pilfering stumps of cigarettes thrown away by my uncle.

- Who did Gandhiji try to imitate as a child?
- From where did Gandhiji first get money to smoke Indian cigarettes?
- How did Gandhiji regard the habit of smoking when he grew up? What led to his transformation?
- Why did he and his friend go to Ramji Mandir?

3) Read the passage given below and try to answer the following questions:

Gandhiji felt disturbed and unhappy after he took the gold from his brother's armlet. He realised he had done something wrong, but he felt this was not enough. He felt that a real and complete cleansing was possible only if he confessed. Gandhiji was wrong to have taken the gold from his brother's armlet because he took it without telling his brother. This act was the same as stealing. Stealing is not justified, even if it is for a good cause.

Gandhiji's father was angry and sad that his son had stolen something, but pleased that he had shown honesty and courage and confessed his wrongdoing.

- Do you think his action was correct or incorrect? Give reasons for your answer, in 20 – 30 words.
- What do you think Gandhiji did with the bit of gold? Why did Gandhiji decide to confess to his father?
- How did Gandhiji's father react on reading his letter of confession?
- Do you think it is easy to accept that what one is doing is wrong, and then change?

4) What do you mean by Ahimsa in the story? Who taught Gandhiji the lesson on 'Ahimsa'? What according to Gandhiji is the purest type of repentance?

5) Read the passage given below and try to answer the following question:

Gandhiji and his friend wanted to commit suicide as they felt unhappy that they needed permission from their elders to do anything. They wanted to be independent. They wanted to be able to act without taking permission from their elders. Their courage failed them because they feared they would not die instantly and also because they were not sure whether killing themselves would solve their problem. Gandhiji and his friend gave up the idea of smoking after they had given up the idea of suicide.

- Why did Gandhiji and his friend want to commit suicide?

6) “Committing suicide is definitely not a solution to any problem. We should rather face problems with courage.” Do you think suicide is a solution to problems? Give your opinion.

7) In the lesson that you just read, Gandhiji wanted to help his brother who was in debt. To clear that debt, he steals some gold. However, he realises that wrong means cannot justify the right end. Comment on the above lines in your own words. What do you think about the act of stealing?

8) Do you think it is easy to accept that what one is doing is wrong, and then change?

9) Do you know of any person who changed for the better, or gave up a bad habit (smoking, drinking, drugs, stealing, etc.)? How do you think he/she could do it?

10) You are Anjali. Your mother had recently gone for a medical checkup. You received a call from the doctor regarding the result of her medical reports. Since you have to go out, you leave a message for her. Draft a message regarding the same in not more than 50 - 80 words.