

STUDY MATERIAL 8

Sub: ENGLISH 'B'

Class: XII

Topic : STRONG ROOTS

Date: 13.06.2020

Short Questions & Answers :

1. In which town was APJ Abdul Kalam born ?

Ans : Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam was born in the island town of Rameswaram in the erstwhile Madras state.

2. What was the financial condition of Kalam's family?

Ans : In 'Strong Roots' the narrator Kalam mentions the fact that his father did not have much wealth.

Thus, we can conclude that the financial condition of Kalam's family was moderate.

3. What type of life did Kalam's father lead?

Ans : Kalam's father used to lead a simple life and avoid all inessential comforts and luxuries.

4. What made Kalam's mother's lineage more distinguished?

Ans: One of his mother's forebears was bestowed the title of 'Bahadur' by the British and this made his mother's lineage more distinguished.

5. What is the source of 'Strong Roots'?

Ans: 'Strong Roots' is a chapter in Abdul Kalam's best-selling autobiography 'Wings of Fire'.

6. What according to Kalam did his father possess?

Ans: According to Kalam, his father possessed great innate wisdom and true generosity of spirit.

7. How many people did Kalam's mother feed everyday?

Ans : A.P.J Abdul Kalam could not recall the exact number of people his mother fed everyday but he was sure that more outsiders ate with them than the total number of family members.

8. How did Kalam compare his childhood looks with that of his parents?

Ans: In Kalam's opinion he was a short boy with rather undistinguished looks while his parents were tall and handsome.

9. How was Kalam's ancestral house?

Ans: Kalam's ancestral house which was built in the middle of the 19th century was a fairly large pucca house made of limestone and brick.

10. How was the author's locality?

Ans: The author's locality was predominantly Muslim but there were many Hindu families who lived amicably with their Muslim neighbours.

11. Why was Kalam's father well known in his locality?

Ans: Kalam's father was well known in his locality because he was a wise, generous and a spiritual person who was always ready to serve mankind.

12. Where did Kalam's father go for his evening prayers?

Ans: Kalam's father used to go to an old mosque in their locality for evening prayers.

13. What did little Kalam think about prayers?

Ans: Little Kalam did not have the faintest idea of the meanings of the Arabic prayers but he believed that the prayers reached God.

14. What did Kalam's father say when people thanked him after being cured?

Ans: Kalam's father asked them to thank Allah, the merciful.

15. Describe one of the vivid memories of Kalam's early childhood.

Ans: One of the vivid memories of Kalam's early childhood is of his father and Pakshi Lakshmana Sastry, each in their traditional attire discussing spiritual matters.

16. What can prayer make possible?

Ans: Kalam's father said that prayer made possible a communion of the spirit between people.

17. What according to Kalam's father does adversity always present?

Ans: According to Kalam's father adversity always presents opportunities for introspection.

18. How did his father's answer inspire him?

Ans: His father's answer filled him with a strange energy and enthusiasm.

19. According to Kalam's father what do human beings do in their loneliness?

Ans: According to Kalam's father human beings start searching for company whenever they find themselves alone.

20. What was Jainulabdeen's role in the lives of people who came to him in distress?

Ans: The role of Jainulabdeen was that of a mediator between God and the distressed people, helping them to conciliate the evil forces with prayers and offerings.

21. What is the meaning of 'fear-ridden vision of destiny'?

Ans: The above phrase means that fear that scares a man so much that he refrains from trying to overcome an obstacle or struggle to get rid of an ill situation.

22. When did Kalam's father get up from bed in the morning?

Ans: Kalam's father got up from bed at 4 o'clock in the morning.

23. According to Kalam what can the divine power do?

Ans: According to Kalam the divine power can lift one up from confusion, misery, melancholy and And failure and guide one to one's actual place.

24. How can one achieve 'happiness and peace of mind'?

Ans: Once an individual severs his emotional and physical bond, he can then achieve 'happiness and peace of mind'.

25. Why has Kalam used the adjective 'austere' to describe his father?

Ans: While describing his father Kalam has used the adjective 'austere' to point out his father's severe or strict manner or attitude and also having no comforts or luxuries in life.

26. What had Kalam's father taught his son?

Ans: Kalam's father had taught his son the fundamental truths and values of life.

Descriptive & Analytical Questions :

1. What was Kalam's father's response to his son's query about prayer and spirituality?

Ans: Kalam was by nature curious and innovative. Once, when he was old enough to ask questions, he asked his father about the relevance of prayer in life. His father candidly stated that prayers make a communion of the spirit between people. Prayers transcend the limit of body and help one become a part of the cosmos which admits of no division of wealth, age, caste or creed.

About spirituality, the ability to think or act beyond material aspects, Kalam's father was remarkably objective and relevant : 'One should face adversity with fortitude and understand the relevance of sufferings and adversity.' Kalam's father categorically stated that human beings should undergo introspection and they can always find ways out of the adverse situations. There is no need to appease or worship demonic forces. Acknowledging the divine power, one should sever his emotional and physical bond to acquire true freedom, happiness and peace of mind.

2. In what way did Kalam try to emulate his Father in life?

Ans: Kalam was a close observer of his father's day to day activities. He was much amazed to see him offer namaz at 4 am and then walk down to a small coconut grove about 4 miles away from their house, and then return with about a dozen coconuts tied together, thrown over his shoulder. Kalam never spared any effort in emulating his father's discipline and values in his own world of science and technology. He not only endeavoured to learn the fundamental truths revealed by his father, but also acknowledged with conviction the fact that it is the divine force that can enable a person to overcome confusion, misery, melancholy and failure. 'And once an individual severs his emotional and physical bond, he is on the road to freedom, happiness and peace of mind.'

3. What does Dr. Kalam tell about taking his meals in childhood?

Ans: In his autobiographical writing 'Strong Roots' Abdul Kalam has stated that in his childhood he would usually eat with his mother, sitting on the floor of the kitchen. His mother placed a banana leaf before him on which she served food. She would serve rice and aromatic sambar with a ladle. Along with this she served a variety of sharp home-made pickle and a dollop of fresh coconut chutney. This shows that he had very simple food habits and also his attachment to his mother.

4. Why does Dr. Kalam feel that he had a secure childhood?

Ans: Dr. Kalam was born and brought up in a middle class Tamil family. His parents were considered to be an ideal couple. He lived in his ancestral house which was built in the middle of the 19th century. Although his family was not an affluent one, he was given everything he needed in terms of food, clothing, medicines etc. He had a congenial family atmosphere. He had no emotional disturbance or material want unfulfilled. He grew up with happiness and confidence. Thus, he rightly said that he had a secure childhood.

5. Who was Pakshi Lakshmana Sastry? How was the relation between him and Kalam's father? What does their relationship signify?

Ans: Pakshi Lakshmana Sastry was the high priest of Rameswaram temple.

Pakshi Lakshmana Sastry was a very close friend of Jainulabdeen, Kalam's father. Recollecting his early childhood memories he states that he had witnessed his father and the high priest of the Rameswaram temple, each in traditional attire discussing spiritual matters. These two people represented two distinctly different religions of the world. Their relationship shows the essence of religion. It brings the message of tolerance and love. This relationship also signifies unity in diversity.

6. "Why don't you say this to people who come to you for help and advise?"— Who asked this and to whom? What answer did the speaker get?

Ans: Dr. Abdul Kalam had asked this question to his father, Jainulabdeen.

Jainulabdeen had remarked that human beings in their condition of woe looked for a special helper suitable for a particular helper. A lonely person looks for company, a man in trouble looks for a helper. Whenever human beings reach an impasse, they search for a guide to show them the way out. For people in distress he himself acted as a mediator in their attempts to please the demonic forces with prayers and offerings in spite of not approving of this approach. He felt that one must understand the difference between a fear-ridden vision of destiny and the vision that enables us to seek the enemy of fulfillment within ourselves.

