



INDIAN SCHOOL MUSCAT
SENIOR SECTION
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
CLASS IX
THE HAPPY PRINCE



SUMMARY

The story brings out the importance of charity. We learn that love and sacrifice can endear us to God. The prince in the story is no living prince. He is the statue of a dead prince decorated with gold leaves and precious stones. He is known as the Happy Prince because there is a smile on his lips. But the smile gradually gives way to tears.

The Happy Prince cannot help crying over the scenes of misery in the houses of the poor. He decides to help them with his gold leaves and costly stones. The little swallow acts as his messenger, and he gives away all his wealth. The Swallow was on his way back to his homeland when the prince had detained him to help the poor. He still wished to go back but now it was too late. The intense cold killed him.

Thus the little swallow lost his life in helping the poor. His death broke the prince's heart. So the swallow and the prince perished for a noble cause. But their death was not the end. It made them immortal. That is why the angel selected the dead swallow and the lifeless heart of the prince as the noblest things on earth. The story teaches a very useful and very true lesson. We learn that God loves those who love their fellow human beings.

THEME

The story is an allegory. It is based on the theme that love and sacrifice are important values in human life and happiness comes to those who make others happy. Those who have compassion and concern get as much joy as to those who receive their kindness and charity. Hence one must try to live a life guided by the virtues of love, sacrifice, benevolence and joy.

MESSAGE

'The Happy Prince' gives many important messages. The first message is that we must spread happiness around us if we wish to be happy. It is useless to mount statues with gold and jewels when the people are hungry. The Prince could be happy only as long as sorrow was not allowed to enter his palace. Once he saw pain, suffering and injustice even his lead heart cried. The next message is that the disparity and sorrow in society can overcome by compassion, generosity and sharing. The generous prince and the gentle swallow sacrificed themselves to bring happiness to the poor and the needy. However their deaths did not end their lives. The redemptive power of love made them live forever as the precious and chosen ones of God.

I. Read the following extracts and answer the given questions.

A. "I will put up there" he cried, "It is a fine position with plenty of fresh air." So he alighted just between the feet of the Happy Prince.

- i. Who is the speaker and what is he talking about?
- ii. What does there stands for? where was it?
- iii. Why was it a fine position?
- iv. Why did the speaker alight just between the feet of the Happy Prince?

B. So they pulled down the statue of the Happy Prince . “As he is no longer beautiful, he is no longer useful”, said the art professor at the university.

- i. Who pulled down the statue of the Happy Prince? Why?
- ii. Why was the statue n longer beautiful and useful?
- iii. Point out the irony in this statement.
- iv. What did they do after pulling down the statue?

III. Long Answer Questions

- i. Why did the Happy Prince send a ruby to the seamstress? Who helps him in this noble cause?
- ii. Describe the suffering of the poor people in the city. How did the Happy Prince help them?