

Comprehension

27-07-2024

① Socrates ^{was} condemned to death by his government because the Athenian government did not like people who ^{were} always trying to find out things. ^{That is} why they did not like the method of Socrates and held a trial and condemned him to death.

② The government was willing to let him go if he promised to give up his discussion with people and changed his ways of searching for truth.

③ Socrates' reaction to ~~that~~^{the} offer was that he would obey God who set him this task. He further addressed that as long as he had breath and strength, he would never cease him from occupation with philosophy.

④ When government preferred him the cup of poison for not giving up his discussion of truth with people. But he refused to do so and had taken that cup of poison which brought his death. Socrates' ^{considered} this his duty to the people.

Practicing Comprehension

Socrates had many disciples, and the greatest of these was Plato. Plato wrote many books which have come down to us, and it is from these books that we know a great deal of his master, Socrates. Evidently governments do not like people who are always trying to find out things; they do not like the search for truth. The Athenian Government – this was just after time of Pericles – did not like the method of Socrates, and they held a trial and condemned him to death. They told him that if he promised to give up his discussion with people and changed his ways; they would let him off. But he refused to do so, and preferred the cup of poison, which brought death, to giving up what he considered his duty. When on the point of death, he addressed his accusers and judges and said:

“If you propose to acquit me on condition that I abandon my search for truth, I will say: “I thank you, O Athenians, but I will obey God, who, as I believe, set me this task, rather than you; and as long as I have breath and strength I will never cease from my occupation with philosophy. I will continue the practice of accosting whomever I meet and saying to him. ‘Are you not ashamed of setting your heart on wealth and honors while you have no care for wisdom and truth and making your soul better?’ I know not what death is – it may be a good thing, and I am not afraid of it. But I do know what it is a bad thing to desert one’s post, and I prefer what may be good to what I know to be bad.”

Questions

1. Why was Socrates condemned to death by his government?
2. On what condition was the government willing to let him go?
3. What was Socrates’ reaction to that offer?
4. What did Socrates consider his duty to the people?

⑦ Try to Learn Good in Others

People of every country consider themselves superior to other countries. But the fact is that no one is either too good or too bad. There is need to pick up the best things and eradicate the worst things. The pitiful reality is that concentration must be towards poor people. However, anything good in others should be taken and bad should be eliminated.

EXERCISE 7

In every country, people imagine that they are the best and the cleverest and the others are not so good as they are. The Englishman thinks that he and his country are the best; the Frenchman is very proud of France. The Germans and Italians think no less of their countries and many Pakistanis imagine that Pakistan is in many ways the greatest country in the world. This is wrong. Everybody wants to think well of himself and his country. But really there is no person who has not got some good and some bad qualities. In the same way, there is no country which is not partly good and partly bad. We must take the good wherever we find it and try to remove the bad wherever it may be. We are, of course, most concerned with our own country. Unfortunately, it is in a bad way today. Many of our people are poor and unhappy. They have no joy in their lives. We have to find out how we can make them happier. We have to see what is good in our ways and customs and try to keep it, and whatever is bad we have to throw away. If we find anything good in other countries, we should certainly take it.

EXERCISE 8