A Book Report On Siddhartha, By Herman Hesse Essay, Research Paper

Book report by Sam Ruppo – Y1 02-6755133

Name of the book: Siddhartha

Author: Hermann Hesse

1. Choose page 30/50/70, and describe what happens there, and how it is connected to the rest of the book.

Page 30:

This book takes place in India, 5th century.

On this page, it is told how Siddhartha, the main character in the story, meets Buddha, and listens to his teachings. This is a very important day, and event, in Siddhartha’s life. It is important to the plot for 2 main reasons. First of all, because Siddhartha’s friend, Gotama, leaves Siddhartha after listening Buddha’s teachings, and becomes one of his followers. Siddhartha and Gotama have always been friends, since they were kids, they always did everything together. His loss was a shock to Siddhartha because he wasn’t used to being alone. Now Gotama stopped following Siddhartha blindly. He is on his own way. He is a Buddhist monk. In order to understand the second reason why this page is so important, we must understand the reason why Siddhartha didn’t follow Buddha. Siddhartha recognized Buddha by first sight . He recognized him by his peaceful look, by the stillness of his form. Buddha looked like the pure form of light and peace, as if he was in a state without seeking, a state without effort – Siddhartha immediately saw that this, if anything, can be called Nirvana. “He wore his gown, and walked exactly like the other monks, but his face and his step, his peaceful downward glance, and every finger of his hand spoke of completeness, sought nothing and reflected an invulnerable peace. “. Never before Siddhartha loved a man so much, so peaceful and gentle was his appearance. The same were his teachings. They were clear and proved. They showed a complete picture of the world. Buddha’s teachings united all of Samana’s and Brahmin’s world into one unbreakable chain. Siddhartha admitted that. And yet, he didn’t follow Buddha. Why? Because he didn’t believe that one can find Nirvana through teachings. He believed that Buddha’s way is unique for him, and everyone must find his own way to attain Nirvana. “The teachings of the enlightened Buddha embrace much, they teach much – how to live righteously, how to avoid evil. But there is one thing that this clear, worthy instruction doesn’t contain : what the Illustrious One himself experienced – he alone among hundreds of thousands”. Siddhartha decides to go his own way. This is very important, because it means that now Siddhartha will always try to find his own way, learn everything only by his own experience. Now, when he rejected this perfect teaching, which was taught by a holy man, no other teachings can ever attract him.

2. Criticize this book. And do not write : ‘This book stinks’. Explain why, how, and in what places.

I think ‘Siddhartha’ is an excellent book This book is beautifully written, using an excellent language ( although it is only a translation from German ). It’s purity and beauty style are almost Biblical. Its text simply flows, like water in a river, beautifully and gently. “… when you throw a stone into the water, it finds the quickest way to the bottom of the water. It is the same when Siddhartha has an aim, a goal. Siddhartha does nothing : he waits, he thinks, he fasts, but he goes through the affairs of the world like the stone; he is drawn by his goal and lets himself fall “. The only book I can compare its style with, is the Bible. Also, like the Bible, it interprets sophisticated philosophical and religious ideas into a simple form, using beautiful metaphors, and explains them (like in the example above). But, this is not a book that talks about philosophy and explains it in an easy language. It’s much deeper; it is a philosophical book by himself. Actually, it is a western interpretation to eastern philosophy ideas. Although it talks about reaching Nirvana, and attaining salvation which are Buddhism terms, but it is about eternal searches of a man to find himself, to find what he really is. It is wrapped in a Hinduistic cover, but its only a cover for his own ideas, and the message is to the whole world. This book is about the seeking of humanity for wisdom, knowledge, Nirvana, salvation, peace, prosperity and the true meaning of life. I have not seen many books that managed to combine philosophy, religion, and an amazing language like this book. For all these reasons, I think ‘Siddhartha’ is a marvelous book.

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