English 11 Siddhartha QUOTE EXPLICATIONS

1. “He had begun to suspect that his worthy father and his other teachers, the wise Brahmins, had already passed on to him the bulk and best of their wisdom, that they had already poured the sum total of their knowledge into his waiting vessel; and the vessel was not full, his intellect was not satisfied, his soul was not at peace, his heart was not still. The ablutions were good, but they were water; they did not wash sins away…” (Hesse 5).

2. “Siddhartha learned a great deal from the samanas; he learned many ways of losing the Self. He travelled along the path of self-denial through pain, through hunger, through thirst and fatigue. He travelled the way of self-denial through mediation, through the emptying of the mind of all images. Along these and other paths did he learn to travel. He lost his Self a thousand times and for days on end he dwelt in non-being. But although the paths took him away from Self, in the end they always led back to it” (Hesse 15-16).

3. “There is, so I believe, in the essence of everything, something that we cannot call learning. There is, my friend, only a knowledge—that is everywhere, that is Atman, that is in me and you and in every creature, and I am beginning to believe that this knowledge has no worse enemy than the man of knowledge, than learning” (Hesse 19).

4. “Not for one moment did I doubt that you were the Buddha, that you have reached the highest goal which so many thousands of Brahmins and Brahmins’ sons are striving to reach. You have done so by your own seeking, in your own way, through thought, through meditation, through knowledge, through enlightenment. You have learned nothing through teachings, and so I think, O Illustrious One, that nobody finds salvation through teachings. To nobody, O Illustrious One, can you communicate in words and teachings what happened to you in the hour of your enlightenment” (Hesse 33-34).

5. “When anyone reads anything which he wishes to study, he does not despise the letters and punctuation marks, and call them illusion, chance and worthless shells, but he reads them, he studies and loves them, letter by letter. But I, who wished to read the book of the world and the book of my own nature, did presume to despise the letters and signs. I called the world of appearances, illusion. I called my eyes and tongue, chance” (Hesse 40).

6. “’I can think, I can wait, I can fast.’

‘Is that all?’

‘I think that is all.’

‘And of what use are they? For example, fasting, what good is that?’

‘It is of great value, sir. If a man has nothing to eat, fasting is the most intelligent thing he can do. If, for instance, Siddhartha had not learned to fast, he would have had to seek some kind of work today, either with you, or elsewhere, for hunger would have driven him. But as it is, Siddhartha can wait calmly’” (Hesse 65).

7. “Although he found it so easy to speak to everyone, to live with everyone, to learn from everyone, he was very conscious of the fact that there was something which separated him from them—and this was due to the fact that he had been a Samana. He saw people living in a childish or animal-like way, which he both loved and despised. He saw them suffer and grow gray about things that to him did not seem worth the price—for money, small pleasures and trivial honors” (Hesse 69-70).

8. “Just as the potter’s wheel, once set in motion, still turns for a long time and then turns only very slowly and stops, so did the wheel of the ascetic, the wheel of thinking, the wheel of discrimination still revolve for a long time in Siddhartha’s soul; it still revolved, but slowly and hesitatingly, and it had nearly come to a standstill” (Hesse 76).

9. “Siddhartha was deeply horrified. So that was what he had come to; he was so lost, so confused, so devoid of all reason, that he had sought death. This wish, this childish wish had grown so strong within him: to find peace by destroying his body” (Hesse 89).

10. “…and when I learned that, I reviewed my life and it was also a river, and Siddhartha the boy, Siddhartha the mature man, and Siddhartha the old man, were only separated by shadows, not through reality. Siddhartha’s previous lives were also not in the past, and his death and his return to Brahma [like God] are not in the future. Nothing was, nothing will be, everything has reality and presence” (Hesse 107).