

STUDY MATERIAL - 05

'THE STORY OF MY EXPERIMENTS WITH TRUTH' : PART 3- SUMMARY

Part 3, Chapter 1 Summary

Rumblings of the Storm

- Bon voyage! Gandhi sails to South Africa.
- He picks out clothing for his wife and children, aiming for influence over the community. That's no fun for them. :(
- A storm hits the boat. Passengers are afraid, but Gandhi consoles them.

Part 3, Chapter 2 Summary

The Storm

- The ship anchors at the port of Durban, but the officials quarantine it for a longer time than necessary because residents charge Gandhi with unjustly condemning white people in Natal and with seeking to swamp Natal with shiploads of Indians.
- Gandhi holds his ground, refusing to leave. He insists that if they're attacked, he'll stand by his principle of non-violence.
- Eventually, the authorities give up and allow the passengers to get off the boat.

Part 3, Chapter 3 Summary

The Test

- Once he goes ashore and heads into the city, Gandhi is attacked by the crowd.
- The police escort him to a house, from which he later has to escape in a disguise since the crowd is outside.
- Gandhi refuses to prosecute his assailants, saying they believe he made exaggerated statements about them while in India and that they'll be sorry for their actions when the truth is known.

Part 3, Chapter 4 Summary

The Calm After the Storm

- Gandhi speaks with a journalist and clarifies that he wasn't bringing Indian passengers to settle and that he said nothing in India that he hadn't said in South Africa. Thanks for clearing that up, G.
- Legislation is passed that discriminates against the Indian residents of Natal. Gandhi fights against the new laws.
- He says public institutions should draw their current expenditures from funds received annually, rather than from permanent funds. Permanent money, he says, contains the seeds of moral downfall because people start fighting over it instead of being accountable to the public, who could withhold their donations.

Part 3, Chapter 5 Summary

Education of Children

- Gandhi decides to teach his children at home and not send them to public school.
- He says the advantages of self-respect they gained ultimately benefited them.

Part 3, Chapter 6 Summary

Spirit of Service

- Gandhi regularly volunteers a small amount of time at a hospital to fulfil his need to serve.
- He also learns how to help his wife during labour. He says education begins as early as conception.
- Gandhi says it's ignorance to believe the sexual act is an independent function like sleeping or eating and that parents should have sex only when they want to reproduce.

Part 3, Chapter 7 Summary

Brahmacharya—I

- Our hero begins to think of taking the *brahmacharya* vow, which means giving up sex altogether. Forever.
- He says vows don't close the door to freedom but open them. He says self-control is difficult, and he initially failed at it. But, he comes to believe that caring for children is inconsistent with wanting to do public work.

Part 3, Chapter 8 Summary

Brahmacharya—II

- Gandhi discusses implementing his *brahmacharya* vow, which he takes in 1906. He says control of the palate—eating simple, spiceless, and often uncooked foods—to restrain the senses and passions is essential to giving up sex.
- So is fasting. We're impressed, Gandhi.

Part 3, Chapter 9 Summary

Simple Life

- Gandhi now gets down with what he calls self-help. He learns to wash his own clothes and cut his own hair.
- His mistakes cause people to laugh at him, but he's undeterred.

Part 3, Chapter 10 Summary

The Boer War

- War is declared. Gandhi's personal sympathies are actually with the Boers, but nevertheless, he feels it's his duty as a British citizen to participate in the defence of the empire.
- So, he organizes an ambulance corps of Indians. They serve well for six weeks and increase the prestige of Indians.

Part 3, Chapter 11 Summary

Sanitary Reform and Famine Relief

- Here, we receive some quick details on Gandhi's attempts to convince the Indian community to become more sanitary.
- He praises their contributions to India for famine relief.

Part 3, Chapter 12 Summary

Return to India

- Mr. G. decides to return to India, lest he focus too much on making money in South Africa. Indians in Natal give him many costly gifts, such as jewellery, as he prepares to leave.
- He decides to donate these to a trust for service to the community. He believes public workers shouldn't accept costly gifts.

Part 3, Chapter 13 Summary

In India Again

- In India, Gandhi meets with some well-known people and attends the Congress. He finds the sanitation lacking and offers to clean up some of it himself.
- He can't get anyone to help him, however, and he's dismayed at the behaviour of the delegates and volunteers.

Part 3, Chapter 14 Summary

Clerk and Bearer

- Volunteering for the Congress, Gandhi works as a clerk sorting through letters and even as a bearer, buttoning up an official's shirt. He says these humble tasks teach him much, and he doesn't expect to be given a high station.
- He worries over the emphasis on English in the Congress, wishing the native language were spoken instead.

Part 3, Chapter 15 Summary

In the Congress

- Gandhi gets a resolution on South Africa passed through the Congress. He mostly notes his anxiety in publicly speaking on behalf of it.
- Of course, he later becomes better at speaking.

Part 3, Chapter 16 Summary

Lord Curzon's Darbar

- Gandhi talks of the fancy clothes men have to wear to attend vice-regal darbars. Wearing the jewels is required for them to maintain their possessions of wealth and titles. Gandhi dislikes this state of affairs.

Part 3, Chapter 17 Summary

A Month with Gokhale—I

- Mr. G. details his time living with the leader Gokhale. Gandhi says Gokhale is dedicated to public service.
- He's unable to ride a tramcar, due to the wide publicity about him.
- Gandhi is okay with this but not okay with Gokhale saying he doesn't have free time with which to take walks. Gandhi emphasizes that it's important to exercise.

Part 3, Chapter 18 Summary

A Month with Gokhale—II

- Gandhi goes out to meet with several people while staying with Gokhale. He has religious discussions with them, still finding Christianity not to his liking.
- Our hero sees sheep being sacrificed and finds it abhorrent.
- He wishes some great person would someday come forth to put a stop to the slaughter of animals.

Part 3, Chapter 19 Summary

A Month with Gokhale—III

- Gandhi goes around meeting some more people. He doesn't tell us much about any of these individuals and to be honest, not much happens in this chapter.
- At the end, once his stay with Gokhale concludes, Gandhi decides to take a tour through India, traveling third class.

Part 3, Chapter 20 Summary

In Benares

- Traveling, Gandhi notices the bad, dirty conditions for third-class passengers. He suggests that educated men (what about educated women?) travel third class intentionally to reform the passengers and tell the authorities about problems.
- He also visits a dirty temple. He says God must be merciful to endure such unkempt holy places.

Part 3, Chapter 21 Summary

Settled in Bombay?

- Mr. G continues to help Gokhale with public work.
- Gandhi takes on some legal cases and does well with them. But he decides to go to Bombay.

Part 3, Chapter 22 Summary

Faith on Its Trial

- Gandhi's 10-year-old son comes down with a fever, and the doctor recommends eggs and chicken broth. That goes against Gandhi's vegetarianism, and the father is deciding for the son due to the child's age.
- Gandhi feels his faith tested by this trial but keeps his son on a vegetarian diet.
- Manilal, the son, recovers, and Gandhi says God saved him.

Part 3, Chapter 23 Summary

To South Africa Again

- Gandhi settles in India, but it isn't long before his comrades in South Africa ask him to return for public work there.
- He agrees and heads for South Africa.