



Learn English Through Stories

G Series

G27

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1. Dara Shikoh's Durbar – Part 3

And then watch how the regime runs with a great fanfare. It is surprising how Mr. Buzet, despite his wide experience, has made this obvious mistake. We do not say that the principles he has stated are wrong. Definitely not. They are indeed correct, but the truth of these principles does not mean that it can do away with all the necessities of action. Perhaps Sahib was dreaming of an ideal republic, a utopia. Perhaps he had forgotten that the existence of a utopia is limited to the dream, and it is useless to discuss it here. I want to ask Mr. Buzet whether God created the good along with the evil. His answer would be—no.

God has created the good in the absence of evil, and despite this, evil is blazing forth wherever one sees. In the first war between the good and the evil fought in the heavens, evil stood its ground. If one were to search through the world with the aid of a lantern, one would hardly find enough good people to populate a city. The whole world is full of evil. How is a regime supposed to survive in such circumstances unless it is forever ready to eliminate the trespassers, the vicious, the rebels and the brutes? We pray to God that Buzet becomes an emperor of a nation and by putting his words into action, he should provide a lesson for all the world to emulate as to how regimes can be established on ethical principles.

'Jahanpanah! Who doesn't know that a father's duties are different from those of his son? It is the father's duty to nurture and educate his son by providing food, clothes and other necessary items; while it is the son's duty to follow and be obedient to his parents. The duties of an emperor are totally different from those of his subjects. Welfare of the subjects and justice are the greatest duties of the emperors while following the emperor and being thankful are those of the people. If a father beats his son, no one can blame the father, but if the son uses one strong word against his father, it is unacceptable and ungrateful behaviour. If ordinary people take each other's things without permission, then it will be termed as unlawful grabbing or robbery, whereas an emperor's taking control of other realms is certainly his divine right. Expanding the empire by annexing new territories is the most important duty of the emperors, and looking after one's subjects is a vital part of it. Extending the state leads to increases in commerce— art, workmanship and industries receive a welcome impetus. The patriotic fervour and zealous loyalty of the subjects also rises. Pride about the exploits of one's homeland swells. Aren't all these vital and gainful outcomes? Attributing some failures to the expansion of the empire is irrational. The

names of Rome, Iran and Greece did not fade away because they sought to expand their empires and liberate the oppressed people of other occupied territories, but because they themselves were beset with sloth, cowardice, indolence, lustfulness and misdemeanours. They were affected by that law of nature known as stagnation.

From the beginning of the world, there's a continuous struggle among all living beings which can be gainfully termed as the struggle for existence. In this fight for survival, the dominant and strong win, the weak and helpless are defeated and their identities are erased from the face of existence as if they were a flawed image. This law equally affects the human and the beast. Hundreds of animal species were destroyed, and hundreds of large populations became nameless and traceless. After a particular period of time, decadence sets into the heart of each nation, and this eats into wealth and fame, courage and valour. Apart from this, the era speeds towards progress, and when a nation stays in place for a long time, it reeks uncontrollably of the bygone; also because pride in one's ancestors is all too human. Such a nation is unable to make changes in its rites and rituals, lifestyle, nature and civilization which are in consonance with the present-day.

In the end, new nations with fresh fervour crop up. Old nations cannot compete with them.

'Does Mr. Buzet wish that India should turn away from the pride in its ancestry, be counted as a coward and be hunted by the new nations? Watch how this war for survival is being ferociously fought in Europe. Which empire is not trying hardest to expand its borders? Ships are being constructed. Dangerous journeys spanning hundreds of miles are being undertaken using them. Fortunes are being lavishly spent at the rate of petty cowries; the lives of men are being sold for a pittance. Why? All this is happening so that fresh settlements are founded and the commerce of the nation expands. With this the wealth of that nation will multiply and new tracts of land will be secured for its constantly growing population. In two centuries, the population of France will be quadrupled. Their policy of expansion will account for that. We are not saying that India is currently overpopulated. No, vast areas are still unpopulated. But sooner or later this problem will crop up here too. Ever-increasing population is a natural norm which cannot be stopped by anybody. Why doesn't India also follow the European states, and try for a better future? The future is considered more precious than the current state.'

The moment Dr. Bernier took his seat, all present showered praise upon him.

The prince especially liked his speech. He immediately descended from the throne and gratefully clasped Bernier's hands. Meanwhile Buzet sahib's heart was smouldering within. He thought that Bernier's recent challenge and prominence was a concealed insult to Buzet himself, because Dr. Sahib seldom differed from him and whenever he did, it was only to suffer defeat. But this time, the ball had remained in Bernier's court. When Henry Buzet did not budge from his position even after a few minutes of silence, Padre Jozret began thus, 'Dear Sir! In my understanding, civilized nations should never think of their own benefit with conquests. Instead of showering wealth and prosperity upon their own country, and tying the bonds of compliance on other countries for purely selfish interests, through such dominion, they should be looking for the improvement of these defeated nations. Greek conquests not only augmented the fame of Greece, but they also led to the laying of foundations of knowledge, etiquettes, professions, industries and fine arts in the defeated countries. Not just the whole of Europe, but the entire world has acquired education from Greek institutions. Greece taught the first political principles to the world. Philosophy and logic, astronomy, chemistry, medicine, music, all are offspring of this Greek mind. How could Europe have produced such incandescent light that dazzles the eye had Greece not removed the dense clouds of darkness through the brilliance of its civilization? Greek history is full of sacrifices they made in order to civilize others. The Italian conquest bestowed upon the world a beneficence which can never be forgotten till the end of the world; it civilized the heathens, and opened the doors of salvation and liberation for the world. Sirs, if you ask what is that beneficence, it is the spread of the Christ's mission across the world by Italy; eliminating darkness through the Christ's glory. Italy is the cradle whence sprang forth the water to quench the soul's thirst. Jahanpanah! Who says that the fame and mark of Italy is no more? Who says that the empire of Italy has been vanquished from the face of the earth? Today's world is a huge Italy and all the empires of the world are radiating Italian glory. If in 200 BC, the Roman Empire had reached its pinnacle, then today it has spread to the sky and the four directions. The principles of civilization and lifestyle, protocol, and etiquettes of each country prevailing in the world today have been forged out of the Italian factory. In fact, even the Greek influence on us is through Italy. Latin, which is the Italian tongue, is today a sacred language of the civilized nations of the world.

'In Asia, God has made India the treasure-house of knowledge and manners, and since a while now, the invaluable jewels of the Christ have also been passed into its safekeeping. Hence, it is India's duty to carry these benefits over to other Asian countries. It should spend this treasure

magnanimously; and prove its generosity and nobility. If it reaps the benefit of this unlimited wealth all by itself, it will be known as self-centred, and the future generations will blame it for its timidity. If it drinks from the cup of civilization by itself, and keeps other nations away from it, then it will be blamed for only catering to self-interests.

Hence it is India's duty that it makes Kandahar take a sip from the cup, and believe in its heart that it has been enjoined by God to perform this duty.

Undoubtedly, Kandahar will not take the sip easily, but that is because it has not experienced its taste yet and is unaware of its benefits. Now it is India's duty that it should get Kandahar to taste this singular delight, and make it understand its benefits.'

Padre Jozret had just finished his speech when the prince got down from the throne and clasped his hands in gratitude. Dr. Bernier's face glowed with excited delight, but Henry Buzet Sahib's face grew dull because he understood that there was no scope of his advice being accepted. What to talk of the padre, who felt as if he had conquered the world, and why not, because till now no one had argued for Kandahar from this perspective. This was the intelligence of the padre.

Silence reigned for many minutes after this speech. Finally, the prince stated, 'Dear Sirs! I am grateful to all of you from the core of my heart that you made me happy with your wise speeches. When I had entered the Diwan-e Khaas, I was completely against any expedition to Kandahar. Two consecutive defeats had dampened my resolve, and naturally, I thought that this is how God had punished our eager misappropriation. But Dr. Bernier and Padre Jozret's powerful and logical speeches have transformed by thoughts: it is my final decision that as far as possible, I will not relinquish Kandahar. I will make Kandahar a province of India, and this is nothing new. Sanskrit books bear witness to the fact that in olden times, when the star of the Aryans was at its peak, Kandahar was a province of India. Marriages were held between the kings of both the nations. King Dhritrashtra's wife, Gandhari, was the daughter of the Kandahar king. A coldness has crept between the two sisters, but today I will get them to embrace each other.'

After this speech, the court was dismissed.

The End

2. Sportsmanship

The match was between the two best teams. Both of them were three-time winners of the “National Football Tournament”. Supporters of both teams had reached the stadium in abundance. Loud cheers reverberated in the stadium as captain Dutta led his team, Bengal tigers”, and captain Sharma his team, “Punjab lions”, on to the football turf.

The umpires made the call for the start of play. The first half was uneventful. No goals were scored. The crowd was becoming restless. After the 5 minute break, and reprimands from the respective coaches, both teams entered the ground for the resumption of play.

Dutta’s boys scored the first goal, converting a penalty. The lions disagreed and an argument ensued between Sharma and the umpire. Their supporters ran on to the ground and created havoc. The security staff had a tough time clearing the ground. The game was suspended for a while.

The coach of the Punjab team, suddenly went up to the commentator’s desk and announced, “please maintain order, I apologise for my team’s outburst. The umpire’s decision was perfect and the goal was scored,” For a minute there was absolute silence in the stadium. This was followed by loud applause in appreciation of the honesty, and sportsmanship of the coach, from the players of both the teams and the spectators.

The match resumed, Dutta and his men scored another goal in the last minute of the match and won the title. They dedicated their victory to Mr. Deepak Sharma and sportsmanship.

3. Grammar Page

Unit
27

could (do) and could have (done)

A

Sometimes **could** is the past of **can** (see Unit 26):

- Listen. I **can** hear something. (*now*)
- I listened. I **could** hear something. (*past*)

But **could** is not always past. We also use **could** for possible actions now or in the future, especially to make suggestions. For example:

- A: What shall we do tonight?
B: We **could** go to the cinema.
- A: When you go to Paris next month, you **could** stay with Sarah.
B: Yes, I suppose I **could**.

Can is also possible in these sentences ('We can go to the cinema.' etc.). **Could** is less sure than **can**.

What shall we do tonight?

We **could** go to the cinema.



B

We also use **could** (*not can*) for actions that are not realistic. For example:

- I'm so tired, I **could** sleep for a week. (*not I can sleep for a week*)

Compare **can** and **could**:

- I **can** stay with Sarah when I go to Paris. (*realistic*)
- Maybe I **could** stay with Sarah when I go to Paris. (*possible, but less sure*)
- This is a wonderful place. I **could** stay here for ever. (*unrealistic*)

C

We also use **could** (*not can*) to say that something is possible now or in the future:

- The story **could** be true, but I don't think it is. (*not can be true*)
- I don't know what time Lisa is coming. She **could** get here at any time.

Compare **can** and **could**:

- The weather **can** change very quickly in the mountains. (*in general*)
- The weather is nice now, but it **could** change later. (*the weather now, not in general*)

D

We use **could have** (done) to talk about the past. Compare:

- I'm so tired, I **could** sleep for a week. (*now*)
I was so tired, I **could have slept** for a week. (*past*)
- The situation is bad, but it **could** be worse. (*now*)
The situation was bad, but it **could have been** worse. (*past*)

Something **could have** happened = it was possible, but did *not* happen:

- Why did you stay at a hotel? You **could have stayed** with me.
- David was lucky. He **could have hurt** himself when he fell, but he's all right.

E

I **couldn't do** something = it would not be possible:

- I **couldn't** live in a big city. I'd hate it. (= it wouldn't be possible for me)
- Everything is fine right now. Things **couldn't be** better.

For the past we use **couldn't have** ... (= would not have been possible):

- We had a really good holiday. It **couldn't have been** better.

Note that 'I **couldn't do** something' has two meanings:

- (1) I **couldn't** = it would not be possible now, I would not be able:
 - I **couldn't** run ten kilometres now. I'm not fit enough. (= I would not be able)
- (2) I **couldn't** = I was not able (past)
 - I **couldn't** run yesterday because I'd hurt my leg. (= I was not able)