**1.**     **Breakfast**

John Steinbeck

**Summary**

The story “Breakfast” throws light on the fact that the most important thing is contentment. If man has contentment, he can be happy even if he has no house, no permanent job, and no good food to eat.

The story is a faithful account of the writer’s visit to a family of cotton-pickers. He came upon this family as he was walking along a lonely road one morning. He sees a young woman working outside her tent. The writer is feeling cold and hunger. He goes to the tent. He finds the woman preparing breakfast.

Two men, one young and the other old, came out of the tent. They welcomed the writer and invited him to breakfast. They looked very happy and contented with their lot. They said they were happy because they had got a cotton-picking job. They had been working in the cotton fields for the past twelve days. As they sat down to breakfast they told the writer how happy they were with their honest labour. They offered the writer a job in the cotton fields. He was deeply impressed by the simple, honest living and hospitality of cotton-pickers.

The sudden meeting with the simple, honest family of cotton pickers became an everlasting sweet memory for the writer. At the end, the writer expresses his feelings. (219 words)

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**Discuss the theme of the story “Breakfast”?**

The theme of the story “Breakfast” is that if man has contentment, he can be happy even if he has no house, no permanent job, and no good food for long.

The writer relates his personal experience to prove that things do not bring happiness. It is our attitude towards life and God that ensures it.

This faith of the poor man in the story is the element of great beauty, which the writer speaks of. He is impressed by the cheerful, contented life of the poor cotton-pickers. The breakfast with the cotton-pickers becomes a cherished memory for him. There is a lesson in the story for those who are not satisfied with their lot. It teaches them to be thankful for what they have instead of grumbling against the will of God. The simple, honest cotton-pickers are very hospitable. They love to share their things with others. They cordially welcome guests. (152 words)

**The story gives us a glimpse of the free, happy and peaceful life of cotton-pickers. Comment**

Yes, the story gives us a glimpse of the free, happy and peaceful life of cotton-pickers. These poor people live on occasional day-labour. They have no permanent source of income. Cotton-picking is occasional employment. Yet the cotton-pickers can manage to live within their means. They live a simple life.

The story also shows that the cotton-pickers are deeply religious people. They never grumble over their hard lot. They thank God for what they get. They are very generous and hospitable. They love to share their things with others. They are free from the vices of the rich. They are not selfish, greedy and dishonest. They love to share their blessings with others. They not only invite the writer to breakfast, but also offer to help him with a job in the cotton fields.

From what we read in the story we can safely conclude that these are the people who enjoy true happiness and satisfaction in this world of woes and worries. (162 words)

**“Breakfast” is a criticism on the materialistic modern age particularly on city people. Discuss.**

In this story, the writer has indirectly criticized the people who think that only things can bring happiness. The writer relates his own personal experience to prove that things do not bring happiness. It is our attitude towards god and life that ensures it.

The cotton-pickers in the story are satisfied fellows. They did not have any complaint or anger against any person or agency because of their poverty. They were happy with the little living they had. They had been eating good food just for twelve days, but they were grateful to God. The older man said while eating, “God Almighty, it’s good.” Contentment and gratefulness to God was their wealth. They were able to buy new clothes, after working for twelve days. It was very easy to them to become happy on little favours from God. They did not need much to be happy.

Therefore, the story is a criticism on the materialistic modern age, particularly on city people who think that things bring happiness. (167 words)

**Discuss the attitude of cotton pickers with the writer.**

**Why is the writer so much impressed by the cotton-pickers? Explain**

After having breakfast, the younger man offered the writer to join in their work of cotton picking, but the writer rejected the offer. However, he thanked for the breakfast.

The writer expressed his feelings at the start and at the end of the story. At the start of the story, the writer says that the remembrance of the offer of work and the attitude of the cotton pickers fill him with pleasure. He can remember these in the smallest detail. This memory is so good that he finds himself recalling it repeatedly. At the end, he thinks that there was a great element of beauty. That element of great beauty makes him happy whenever he thinks about it.

Therefore, we see that the offer of work and the attitude of the family of cotton pickers had a very good effect on the writer. He still remembers it and it appears that he will always remember it. Whenever he remembers it, he gets happiness.

He is impressed by the simplicity, contentment, and the sincerity of the cotton pickers. (177 words)

**The story “Breakfast” is a symbolic story. Discuss.**

**The story “Breakfast” has an allegorical interpretation. Discuss.**

**The qualities are personified in the story “Breakfast”.**

No doubt, the story “Breakfast” is a symbolic story and it has an allegorical interpretation. In this story, the good qualities of contentment and gratefulness to God have been personified as persons. The writer has presented a family of cotton pickers. They are symbol of contented and grateful village people.

They are symbol of kindness and good-heartedness. They are very poor and eating good food only for twelve days. However, they are not just ordinary people. They are the symbol of good qualities. The writer has presented them to prove that a person can be kind even to a stranger if he wants to.

They are the symbol of contentment. They are contented people. They are so poor that they live in a tent just like gypsies.

They are symbol of gratefulness to God. In spite of all their poverty, they are happy and grateful to God on His favours. Their gratefulness to God is very touching and impresses the writer very much. Such people are really symbol of good qualities.