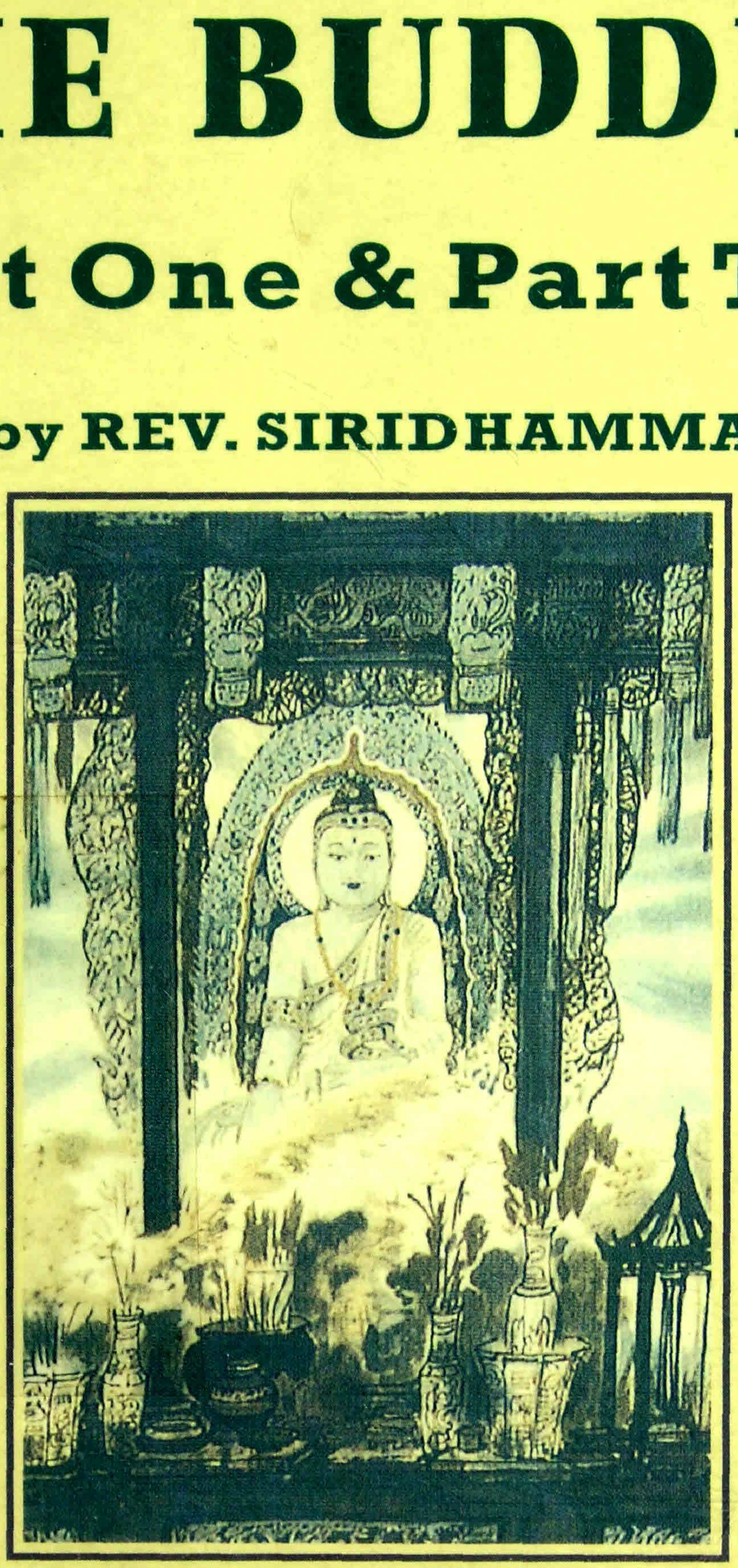
THE LIFE OF THE BUDDHA

Part One & Part Two

by REV. SIRIDHAMMA



THE LIFE OF THE BUDDHA

PART ONE

(A textbook for the classes of the Primary schools)

by REV. SIRIDHAMMA

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

The Maha Bodhi Society, Bangalore, and Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre at Leh, Ladakh, are engaged in popularizing the Teaching of the Buddha. Besides meditation courses, we are administering several projects of social service, of which education is one. We have established schools at Bangalore, Mysore and Ladakh.

In these schools, students, besides the standard scholastic education, are given sound training in moral education and in the basic Buddhist culture. For this "The Life of the Buddha' in two parts published by the Buddhist Missionary Society, Kuala Lumpur, was found to be ideal for use as a test book, because of the simple and lucid narration of the life of the Buddha. The presentation is not only inspiring but effectively brings out the fundamental teachings of the Buddha.

We are grateful to the Ven. K.Sri Dhammananda, founder President of the Buddhist Missionary Society, Kuala Lumpur, for very kindly according his permission to reprint 'The Life of the Buddha'. We are, further, obliged to the Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation , Taipei, Taiwan, for their generosity in reprinting this book free of cost.

Bhikkhu Sanghasena
President,
Maha Bodhi Society,
Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre,
Leh-Ladakh.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

This short introduction of the Life of the Buddha, rendered as Part I of a two volume work, was compiled by the Rev. Siri-Dhamma when he was a novice monk in the Brickfields Buddhist Temple.

After the script had been completed, the Venerable H. Gunaratna and Mr. Lim Eng Chuan, went through the details and each gave suggestions and ideas which had since then, been incorporated and used to complete this valuable booklet.

This publication meets a long-felt need for a suitable text-book for Lower Secondary School standards that deals particularly with the period of earthly existence of the Buddha.

Although the account of the Life in the book is set down very briefly, I believe that this presentation offers a good deal of material for the study of our Great Master's Life.

Teachers of the Dhamma classes in the various Buddhist Sunday Schools and even other religious institutions may elaborate on certain lessons to their satisfaction in their classes, when this booklet is used as a textbook.

Since the material dealt with is very fundamental and comprises the basic knowledge desired of a junior beginning the study of Buddhism, it is recommended that teacher make sure the students have grasped the principles involved in each topic or lessons by getting the class to answer questions set down at the end of every chapter.

The omission of legend and the absence of accounts of miracles from the compilation is intended to indicate that the contribution of the Buddha to world Happiness and His Supreme Enlightenment, when he was born a man had successfully bridged the gap between man and divinity, is more than enough for anyone who seeks the Truth, to appreciate and accept the Method of the Great Master without having to call on miracles and legends to highlight His life.

As a compensation for the many pages of words and words, there are several good illustrations pertaining to the Life of the Buddha. I believe our young readers will be pleased with these illustrations, as they have been specially selected for the book, having relevant bearing on the period, the custom as well as the dignity of the occasion, for each topic represented.

Many of the illustrations are by courtesy of the Buddhist Information Centre, Sri Lanka.

Thanks are due to the Buddhist Missionary Society for undertaking the publication of the two volumes and for meeting the cost of printing.

Kuala Lumpur
31.8.1983

VEN. K. SRI DHAMMANANDA THERA

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LESSON 1

KING SUDDHODANA AND QUEEN MAHA MAYA

Long ago. there was a king called Suddhodana. He married a beautiful Koliyan princess named Maha Maya. The couple ruled over the Sakyas, a warrior tribe living next to the Koliya tribe, in the north of India. The capital of the Sakya country was Kapilavatthu.

Since King Suddhodana was a very good king and Queen Maha Maya was equally good, everyone in the kingdom loved them. But they did not have children and they were longing for a son for a long time.

One full moon night, in the palace, the Queen had a dream. She felt herself being carried away by four DEVAS (angels) to Lake Anotatta in the Himalayas. After bathing her in the Lake, the DEVAS clothed her in Heavenly clothes. Soon after a white elephant, holding a white lotus flower in its trunk, appeared and went round her three times. Finally the elephant disappeared. She woke up. She found it was all a dream.

The next day, early in the morning, the Queen told the King about the dream. The King was puzzled and so he sent for some wise men and asked them the meaning of the dream.

The wise men said "Your Majesty, you are very lucky, the DEVAS have chosen our Queen as the mother of the Purest-One and the child will become a very great being." The King and Queen were very happy when they heard this.

They were so pleased that they invited many of the noblemen in the country to the palace to a feast and to tell them the good news.

Even the needy were not forgotten. Food and clothes were given to the poor people.

EXERCISE 1

1. *Who was Suddhodana?*
2. *Where was he ruling?*
3. *Who is the Queen in the picture?*
4. *Which kingdom did she come from?*
5. *What was her dream?*
6. *What did she do the next morning?*
7. *What did the king do after the dream?*
8. *Why were the King and Queen happy after the dream?*
9. *What did the King do to show he was happy?*



LESSON 2

THE BIRTH IN LUMBINI PARK

About ten months after the dream, the Queen was expecting her child and so she went to the King and said "My dear, I have to go back to my parents. My baby is about due now." Since it was the custom in India, for a wife to have her baby in her father's house, the King agreed, saying "Very well, I will make the necessary arrangements for you to go."

The King then sent soldiers ahead to clear the road and some were retained to guard the Queen as she was carried in a decorated palanquin. The Queen left Kapilavatthu in a long procession of soldiers and retainers, for the capital of her father's kingdom.

On the way to the Koliya country, they passed a garden called Lumbini Park. This garden was near the kingdom called Nepal, at the foot of the Himalayan mountains. At that time, the park was full of sweet scented flowers growing on the Sala trees and thousands of birds, bees and other insects had flocked to the trees.

The beautiful park with its trees and scented flowers and busy birds and bees attracted the Queen. Since the park was a good resting place, the Queen ordered the bearers to stop there for a while. However, as she rested underneath one of the Sala trees, her baby boy was born. It was an auspicious day. The birth took piace on a VESAK full moon day, in the year 623 B.C.

According to the legends about this Birth, the baby began to walk seven steps forward and at each step, a lotus flower appeared on the ground where his foot should have been.

Another legend tells us that the baby said:

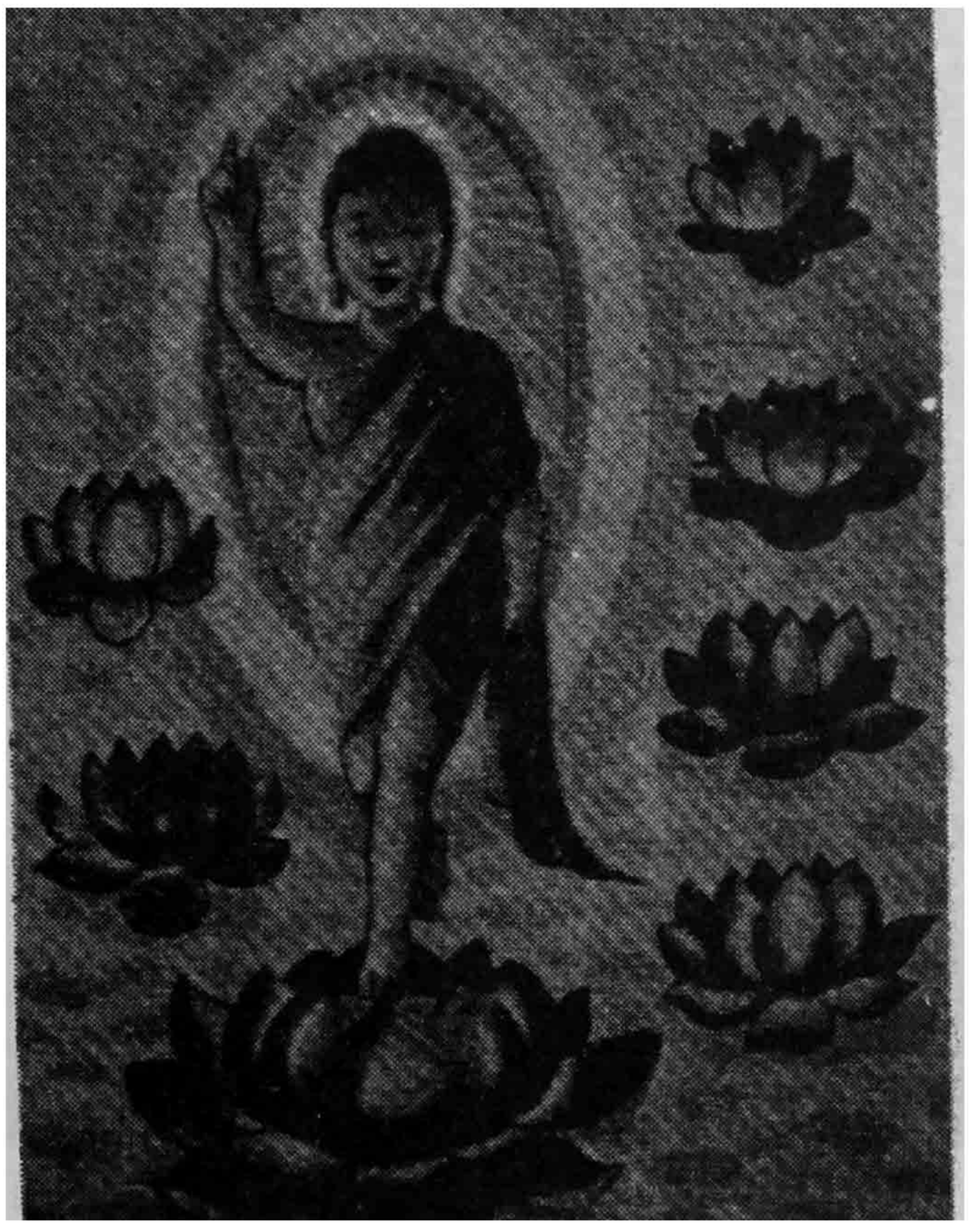
Aggohamsmi Lokassa	"I am the chief in the world,
Jettho Lamasmi Lakassa	There is no equal to me
Settho Hamasmi Lokassa	I am supreme
Aya mantima jati	This is my last birth
Natthi dani punabhavo.	No Rebirth for me."

After the birth of her baby son, Queen Maha Maya immediately returned to Kapilavatthu.

When the King learnt of this he was very happy and there was rejoicing all over the country.

EXERCISE 2

1. *Why did Queen Maha Maya want to leave Kapilavatthu?*
2. *Where was her father's palace?*
3. *How did the King send her off?*
4. *Why did the Queen stop at the park?*
5. *What was the park called?*
6. *When did the birth of the baby take place?*
7. *What does legend say about the birth?*
8. *The baby was supposed to have said something. What did he say? What does that mean?*





The Birth of the Bodhisatta

LESSON 3

THE NAMING CEREMONY

The King Suddhodana had an old teacher. As the teacher was very wise, he was known as a Sage. His real name was Kala Devala but people usually call him Asita the Sage. Asita lived in the jungle. He had heard that the King then had a son; he was very happy because this was the first time a child was born to the King.

The next day, he went to see the King's son. The King was very happy to see his wise old teacher again. In the palace, after the Sage was seated, the King brought the Prince before the Sage and said "Teacher, my son was born only yesterday. Here he is. Please see if his future will be good."

As the King said this, he lowered the infant Prince before the Sage so that he might examine him properly. However, the baby turned his feet on to the Sage's head. Thus surprised, Asita took hold of the baby's feet and examined them very carefully. He saw some marks on the Prince's feet. Then he got up and said, "This Prince will become a very great Teacher in this world." The Sage was very pleased and putting his palms together, paid due respect to the baby Prince. The King seeing this, also did the same. This was the first salutation of the King.

Everyone was happy and pleased to know of the Sage's prediction.

On the fifth day, the King invited five wise men to witness the Naming Ceremony and to suggest a good name for the Prince. The wise men examined the birth marks of the Prince and concluded that "The Prince will be a King of kings if he wants to rule. If he chooses a religious life then he will become the Wisest -- the Buddha."

The youngest of the five wise men called Kondanna said "This Prince will be the Buddha and nothing else."

Then the wise men gave him the name SIDDHARTHA meaning "wish-fulfilled"

EXERCISE 3

1. *Who was Asita? What was his real name?*
2. *Why did he go to the palace? Was he asked to go?*
3. *What did the King do after Asita was seated in the palace?*
4. *What happened as the King tried to show the baby to the Sage?*
5. *Was Asita annoyed at this incident?*
6. *What did Asita do when the incident happened?*
7. *What did Asita say about the Prince?*
8. *What did Kondanna say?*
9. *What did the other four wisemen say?*
10. *What was the name given to the Prince?*
11. *What does this name mean?*



LESSON 4

HIS EDUCATION

On the seventh day, Prince Siddhartha's mother died. The king had another queen called Prajapati Gotami. She was the younger sister of Queen Maha Maya. She had given birth to a son on the same day that Queen Maha Maya died. Then Prajapati Gotami gave her own son to a nurse and brought up Prince Siddhartha as her own son. She loved him very much. Prince Siddhartha could not remember his own mother.

When Prince Siddhartha was only a few years old, King Suddhodana sent him to school. There were many children in his class. All of them were from noble families. His teacher was called Sarva Mitra.

He learnt languages, reading, writing, mathematics, history geography, science and many games like boxing, archery, wrestling and many others. He learnt all these subjects faster than any other pupil in his class. He was the cleverest in the class, the best in games and the best in everything. He gained distinction in every subject and became cleverer than his teachers. He was the wisest and the only one who asked many questions from his teachers and elders. He was the strongest, the tallest and the most handsome boy in the class. He was never lazy, never misbehaved and never disobedient to the teachers. He loved everybody and everybody loved him. He was a friend of all: kind even to animals and never harmed them.

EXERCISE 4

1. *Who was Prajapati?*
2. *How was she related to Maha Maya?*
3. *Who is the teacher in the picture?*
4. *Who are the boys in the picture?*
5. *What is the teacher doing in the picture?*
6. *Was the Prince a clever boy?*
7. *What did he learn?*
8. *Were there many pupils in his class?*
9. *Did his friends like him? Why?*
10. *Why did the teacher love him?*



LESSON 5

PRINCE SIDDHARTHA'S KINDNESS

Prince Siddhartha was very kind to people, animals and other living things. As a very brave horseman he won many prizes in the country. Although he did not have to suffer any hardships and difficulties as he had everything, he always thought of the poor people and living things who were working hard to make him happy. He felt sorry for them and wanted to make them happy too as he always was.

One day he was walking in the woods with his cousin Devadatta who had his bow and arrows with him. Suddenly Devadatta saw a swan flying and shot at it. His arrow brought the swan down. Both the boys ran to get the swan. As Siddhartha could run faster than Devadatta, he reached the bird first and found, to his surprise, that the swan was still alive. So he gently pulled out the arrow from the wing. He then got a little juice from cool leaves, put it on the wound of the bird to stop the bleeding and with his soft hand, stroked the swan which was very frightened. When Devadatta came to claim the swan, naturally Prince Siddhartha refused to give it to him. Devadatta was very angry to see his cousin keeping the swan away from him. "Give me my bird, I shot it down," said Devadatta.

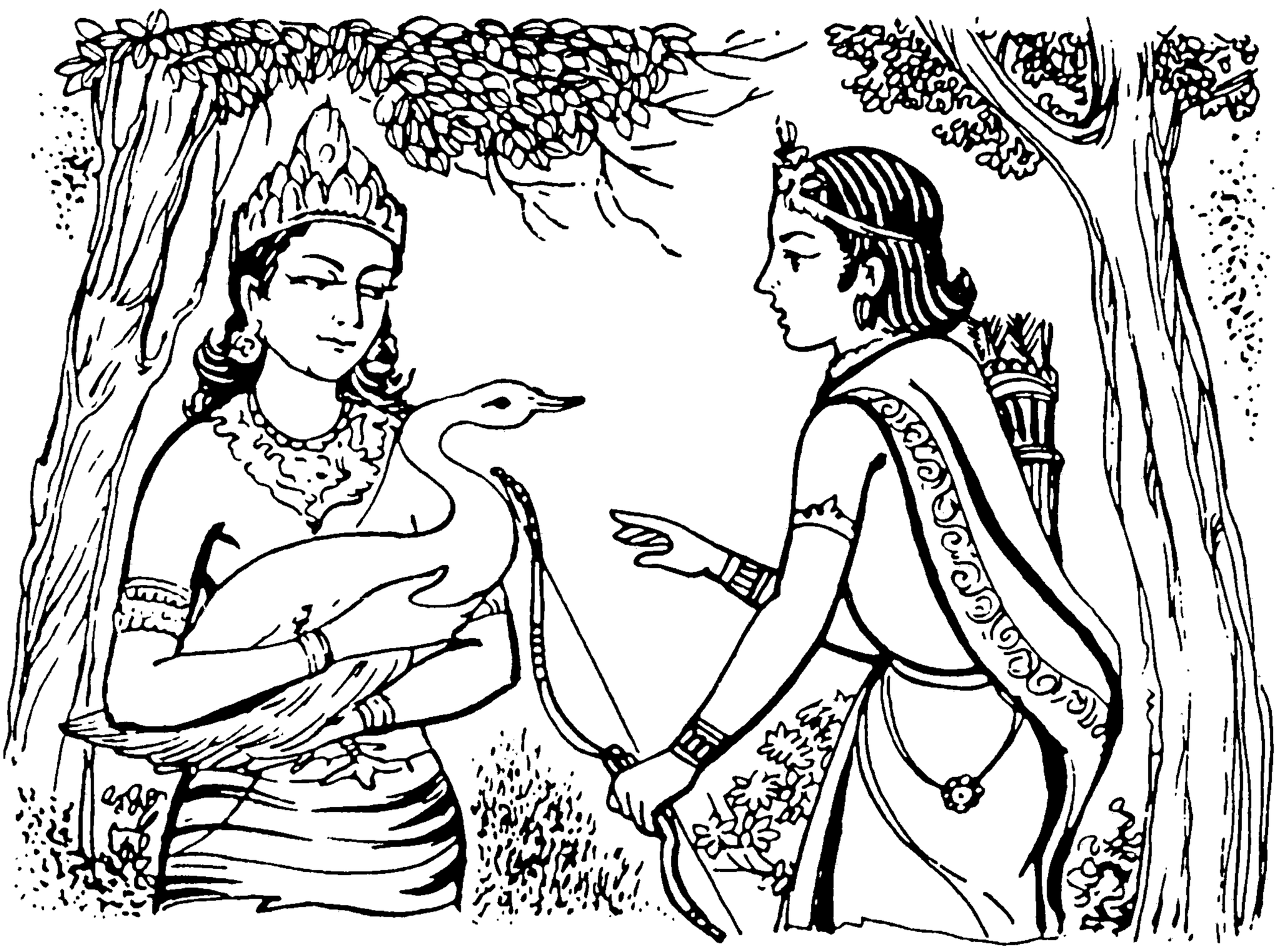
"No, I am not going to give it to you. If you had killed it, it would have been yours. But now since it is only wounded and alive it belongs to me because I saved its life," said Siddhartha.

Devadatta still did not agree. Then Siddhartha suggested, "Let us go to the court of wisemen and ask them who really owns the swan."

Devadatta agreed and then both of them went to the court of wisemen to tell them about their quarrel. The wisemen said, "A life certainly must belong to him who tries to save it, a life cannot belong to one who is only trying to destroy it. The wounded swan by right belongs to Siddhartha."

EXERCISE 5

1. *Who was Devadatta?*
2. *Who was more kind?*
3. *What did Devadatta do when he saw a swan flying?*
4. *How did Siddhartha save the life of the swan?*
5. *Did the boys expect to see the swan alive?*
6. *What happened when Prince Siddartha found that the swan was alive?*
7. *Fill in the blanks:*
   "A life must belong to him who ..... but not to one who tries to ..... and the swan belongs to ..... not to .....:. ?
8. *Why was Siddhartha given the swan?*







. The prince also noticed the activities of various other creatures around him. He saw a lizard, which was crawling out from a crevice in the earth, catching and eating working ants with its tongue. Shortly afterwards, a snake approached, killed the lizard by biting. through its head, and swallowed it. Just at this moment, the prince was astonished to see a hawk suddenly descend from the sky, seize the snake, tear it apart and eat it.



Life as a Prince

LESSON 6

PRINCE SIDDHARTHA'S WEDDING

Prince Siddhartha finished his studies very soon. He had the best teachers to learn from; the best friends to play with; the best house to live in; the best clothes to wear and the best food to eat. His father had built him three palaces one for each season — one for winter, one for summer and one for the rainy season. He had also built for him extensive parks and hunting grounds with ponds with water-lilies, swans and beautiful fish in them.

Asita and Kondanna who came to the palace had warned the king, "When your son sees a sick man, an old man, a dead body or a monk, he will want to leave your palace and become a monk himself."

The king was worried that his son would see them and leave the palace. Therefore he gave him many young servants and did not allow any sick man or old man to go into the palace. The king did not even let anybody talk about sickness, old age, death and monks. But Prince Siddhartha was very thoughtful and was asking people many questions. He really wanted to know the meaning of life.

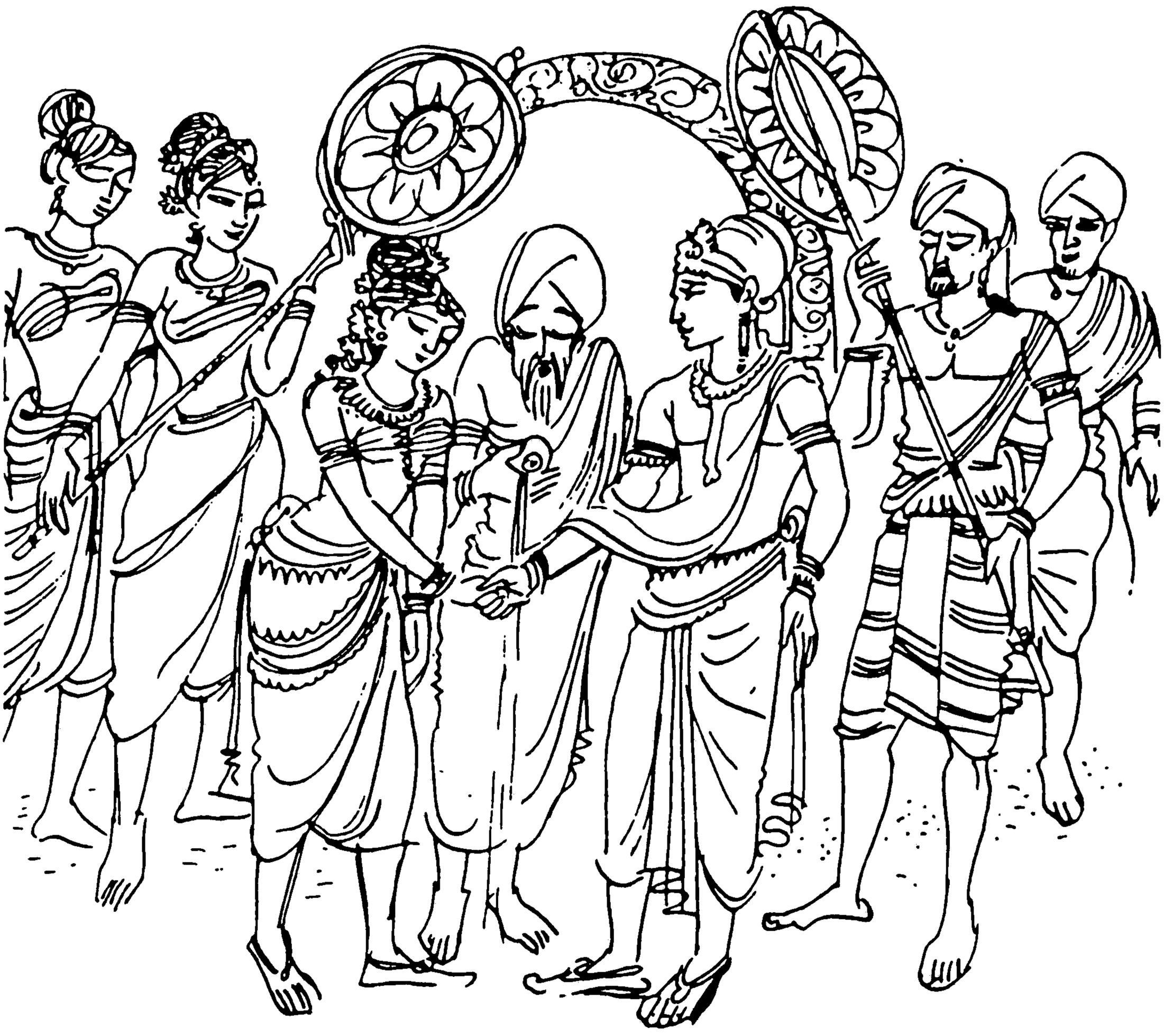
One day the king asked some wise people, "What shall I do to make my son happy? He seems to be thinking always." They said: "Now your son is sixteen years old. Shall we get a beautiful girl for him to marry?"

The King agreed and sent for all the beautiful girls in the country to come to the palace. When all of them came the King asked the prince to choose one to be his wife.

Among them there was a most charming and kind girl by the name of Yasodhara. When Prince Siddhartha gave her a present more valuable than what he had given to the other maidens, the King saw that the Prince had chosen his love. The King happily accepted Yasodhara and allowed his son to marry her.

EXERCISE 6

1. *How was the life of Prince Siddhartha when he was young? Give instances.*
2. *What did his father do to make him happy?*
3. *Why did the king always give him young servants?*
4. *What was the Prince doing always?*
5. *What did the king ask the wise people?*
6. *Whom did the Prince marry?*
7. *How old was he when he married?*



LESSON 7

AN OLD BEGGAR

After what he had done for the Prince the King was satisfied that his son would follow his footsteps and become a king later. He ordered a high wall to be built round the Palace including the park. But the Prince was not happy in this palace living like a prisoner. One day he told his father, "Father, I must go out of the palace gate and see how other people live."

"Very well, my son," said the king, "you shall go outside the paiace wall to see how people live in my city. But first I must prepare things, so that all would be good and proper for my noble son's visit."

When the people had decorated the city the king said, "Now you can go, my dear son, and see the city as you please."

As the young Prince was going through the streets, all of a sudden, from a small old hut beside the road, out came an old man with long silver grey hair, wearing very old torn, dirty rags. The skin of his face was all dried up and wrinkled. His sunken eyes were dim and he was almost blind. There was no teeth in his mouth. He stood up trembling all over almost bent double holding a stick and he did this with two skinny hands to save himself from falling. The old beggar dragged himself along the street paying no attention to all the gay people around him. He was speaking very feebly, begging people around him to give him food as he would die the very day if he had nothing to eat. The Prince saw the old man. He did not know what he was looking at as that was the first time in his life that he saw an old man of this type.

"What is that, Channa?" he asked his driver. "That really cannot be a man! Why is he all bent? What is he trembling for? Why is his hair silver grey, not black like mine? What is wrong with his eyes? Where are his teeth? Is this how some men are born? Tel me, O, good Channa, what does this mean?"

Channa told the Prince, that it was an old man but he was not born like that. "When young he was like us and now due to his old age he has become like this." He told the Prince to forget this man. But the prince was not satisfied.

"Everyone in the world, if he lives long enough becomes like this man. It cannot be stopped," said Channa.

The Prince ordered him to drive back home at once as he was very sad, and wanted to think carefully about that terrible thing called old age; as, a prince and others must one day grow old, weak and sad and none could stop old age, although one is rich, great and powerful.

That night there was a grand Royal treat for the prince. He was not interested or happy at all during the dinner and dance. He was thinking all the time, "Some day you will all grow old, everyone of you, even the prettiest."

He could not sleep when the time came. He was in bed thinking that one day, everyone would grow old, grey, wrinkled, toothless and ugly like that old beggar. He wanted to know if anyone had found a way to stop this horrible thing — old age.

The king, when he heard this story, was very sad and worried and was thinking whether this would make his son leave the palace. So he told his attendants to put on more dances and dinners. But the prince begged his father to allow him to see Kapilavatthu on an ordinary day without the people being told of his visit.

EXERCISE 7

1. *Why was the prince not happy in the palace?*
2. *What did his father say when he asked his permission to go out of the palace?*
3. *What did he see when he went to the city?*
4. *What did the old man say?*
5. *What did the prince ask his driver?*
6. *What did the driver say to him?*
7. *Had the prince seen many old people before? Why?*
8. *Do you think you also will grow old like that?*
9. *What did the king do again to make him happy?*

LESSON 8

A SICK MAN

The king very unwillingly allowed the prince to visit the city, but he thought it would not do any good trying to stop him now since it would only make him unhappy. On this occasion the prince went with Channa, dressed up as young men from noble families, because he did not want the people to know them.

This time the city was quite different. No more joyous crowds of people hailed the prince, no flags, bunting, flowers and well-dressed people, but simple people doing their daily work to earn a living. A black-smith was sweating and pounding to make knives. The jewellers and goldsmiths were making necklaces, bangles, earrings and rings out of diamonds, gold and silver. The cloth-dyers were dyeing clothes of lovely colour and hanging them up to dry. The bakers were busily baking bread, cakes and sweets and selling them to the customers who ate them still hot. The prince looked at these simple common people. Everyone was very busy, happy and pleased in his work.

He also saw a man on the ground, twisting his body, holding his stomach with both hands and crying out in pain at the top of his voice. All over his face and body were purple patches, his eyes were rolling, and he was gasping for breath.

Once again for the second time in his life something made him very sad. At once the prince, being a very kind person, ran forward and carried the man and resting his head on his knee, patted the man and said, "What is wrong with you, what is wrong?" The sick man could not speak but only cry.

"Channa, tell me why this man is like this?" questioned the prince, "What is the matter with his breath? Why does he not talk?"

"O! my prince," said Channa, "do not hold this man like that. This man is sick. His blood is poisoned. He has plague fever and it is burning all over the body and that is why he is crying loudly without being able to speak."

"But are there any other men like this?" asked the prince.

"Yes, you may be the next, if you hold the man so close as that. Please put him down and do not touch him or the plague will come out of him and go to you. You will become the same as he is."

"Are there any other bad things, besides this plague, Channa?"

"Yes, my prince, there are hundreds of other sicknesses as painful as this," replied Channa.

"Can no one help it? Will everyone be sick? Can it happen at any time by surprise?" asked the prince.

"Yes, my dear prince," said Channa, "Everybody in this world. No one can stop it and it can happen any time. One may fall ill and suffer much."

The prince was sadder this time and he returned to the palace and began to think.

EXERCISE 8

1. *Was the king willing to let his son go out of the palace? Why?*
2. *How did the prince go to the city this time?*
3. *What were people doing this time?*
4. *What made him sad this time?*
5. *What did he say when he saw the man on the ground?*
6. *What did he do to him?*
7. *Why did Channa not allow him to do that?*
8. *Why was the prince shocked to see him like that?*
9. *What do you do when you see a sick man like that?*
10. *Do you think you will also fall sick one day?*

LESSON 9

A DEAD BODY

On his return to the palace he was still very dissatisfied and was now thinking more often. The king seeing him so changed became very sad. But once again the prince asked for his permission to go out of the palace to see more life in the city. The king agreed as it was of no use trying to stop his son.

This time, too, wearing the clothes of noblemen the prince and Channa went out from the palace walking in many parts of Kapilavatthu. Then he saw a few people coming along the street crying while four men at the back were carrying a plank on which a very thin man lay flat and still. He was like a stone, never saying a word. Then the people went a little farther, rested the person down on a pile of wood and set the wood on fire. The man did not move as the flames were burning the wood from all sides.

"What is this, Channa? Why does that man lie there so still allowing these people to burn him up?" "He does not know anything. He is dead," replied Channa.

"Dead! Channa, Is this called death? And everyone has to be dead like that man?"

"Yes, my dear prince, all living things must die someday. No one can stop death from coming," replied Channa.

The prince was shocked and surprised and he could not say anything more. He thought that it was a terrible thing that such a thing called death should come to everybody, even kings, and sons of kings. Was there no way to stop it? He went home in silence and began to think in his own room in the palace the whole day.

He was very sorry and sad and said, "Everybody in the world must some day die; no one has found out how to stop it. O, there must be a way to stop it. I must find it out and help the whole world."

EXERCISE 9

1. *What did he see this time?*
2. *What made him more sad?*
3. *What did he ask his driver?*
4. *What did he think after that?*
5. *What did he want to find out?*



The Prince Siddhartha contemplates deeply the vicissitudes of life, after the Four Sights

LESSON 10

A MONK

When he visited the city for the fourth time, in a garden the prince saw a happy man wearing an orange coloured robe. Then he asked Channa. "Who is this man wearing an orange coloured dress? His hair is all shaved off. Why does he look so happy? How does he live and what does he do for a living?"

"That is a monk," said Channa. "He lives in a temple, goes from house to house for his food and goes from place to place telling people how to be happy and how to be good."

The prince was very happy now. He thought: "I must become one like that," and then he walked through the garden very happily.

He walked until he was tired. Then he sat down under a tree to rest. As he was sitting under a cool shady trée, news came that his wife had given birth to a fine baby boy. As soon as he heard the news he said, "Rahula has been born to me, an obstacle has been born to me," and his son's name became "Rahula".

As he was returning to the palace from the garden he passed the room of one of the Princesses called Kisagotami. She was looking out of the window and saw the prince coming. She was so taken in by the young handsome prince that she said loudly: "O! How happy, and how cool must be the mother, and the father, and the wife of such a handsome young princè!"

As he passed this woman, he heard this and thought to himself that everybody would be happier if they knew what real and selfish happiness were.

EXERCISE 10

1. *What did the prince see this time?*
2. *Was he happy to see him? Why?*
3. *What did Channa say about the monk?*
4. *What is the name of Prince Siddhartha's son?*
5. *When did he hear the news of his son's birth?*
6. *What did he hear when he was returning to the palace?*
7. *What did he think about it?*

LESSON 11

LEAVING HOME

The king arranged a grand dinner and dance for the prince to celebrate the birth of his grandson. He invited the best dancers and singers in the country for this. He did this because he saw that the prince was unhappy although he just had a son and the king knew that the prince was going to leave the palace for good. So for the last time at least he must do his best to stop this from happening.

During the dinner the most delicious food was served. The most enchanting, and beautiful dancing girls in the country danced before him. The prince attended the party just to please his father. In fact he was tired and was thinking of how he could stop old age, sickness, unhappiness. and death. He was so tired of thinking that he soon fell asleep.

When the singers and the dancers saw that they were dancing and singing to a sleeping prince, they, too, stopped and rested for a while until the prince woke up again. Like the prince they, too, were very tired and soon fell asleep. Some time later that night the prince got up and was so shocked and unhappy to see these people. What a sight! — all the prettiest, most charming dancing girls and singers in the country, who, an hour ago, were trying to make the prince so happy, were now all over the floor of the room — on chairs, satees and beds in the most ugly, shameful and loathsome positions. Some girls were snoring like pigs, with their mouths wide open, some grinding and chewing their teeth like hungry devils. So ugly and dirty did they look now that this made the prince even more disgusted and very unhappy. He got up quietly from the room as he did not want to wake any of the dancing girls and called his faithful servant, Channa, to saddle his favourite white horse, Kanthaka to go out on a long journey.

As Channa was getting ready his horse he went quietly to see his new born son for the first time in his life. His wife

was sleeping with the baby beside her and her hand covering the baby's face. He could not see the baby's face even. He knew that if he moved his wife's hand to see his son's face he might wake her up and she definitely would not allow him to leave the palace. He said to himself, "If I try by moving her hand to see my son's face, I fear, I may wake her. No! I must go without seeing my son's face this time, but when I have found what I am going forth to seek, I shall come back and see him and his mother again."

Then quietly he went out of the palace at midnight on his white horse Kanthaka with Channa, his faithful servant, holding on to its tail. He came to the city's gate and nobody stopped him and he rode away from all who knew, respected and loved him so much. He took a last look at Kapilavatthu — sleeping so quietly in the moonlight. He was going away to find out a way to stop old age, sickness, and death.

He rode to the bank of the river Anoma. He got down, removed all his jewellery and princely clothes and gave them to Channa asking him to return them to the king. Then he took his sword and cut his long hair. He put on orange coloured clothes, took a begging bowl and asked Channa to go back.

"It is no use living in the palace," said Channa very sadly, "without you, my master. I want to follow you."

"Don't do that, Channa," said the prince, "take these clothes and jewelery to my father and tell him, my mother and wife not to worry. I am going away to find out a way to stop old age, sickness and death."

As soon as I have found it, I will return to the palace to teach it to my father, mother, wife, son and everybody in the world. Then all of them can be very happy."

Channa started to go but the horse refused to go. The prince talked to the horse very kindly, patted it and said, "Please, Kanthaka, go with my friend. Don't wait for me."

Both of them went a little distance and then the horse stopped and turned round to have a last look at the prince. Channa understood the horse's feelings and said, "Friend, our master is going away to bring us something very good. Don't be sad. He will come soon. Let us go."

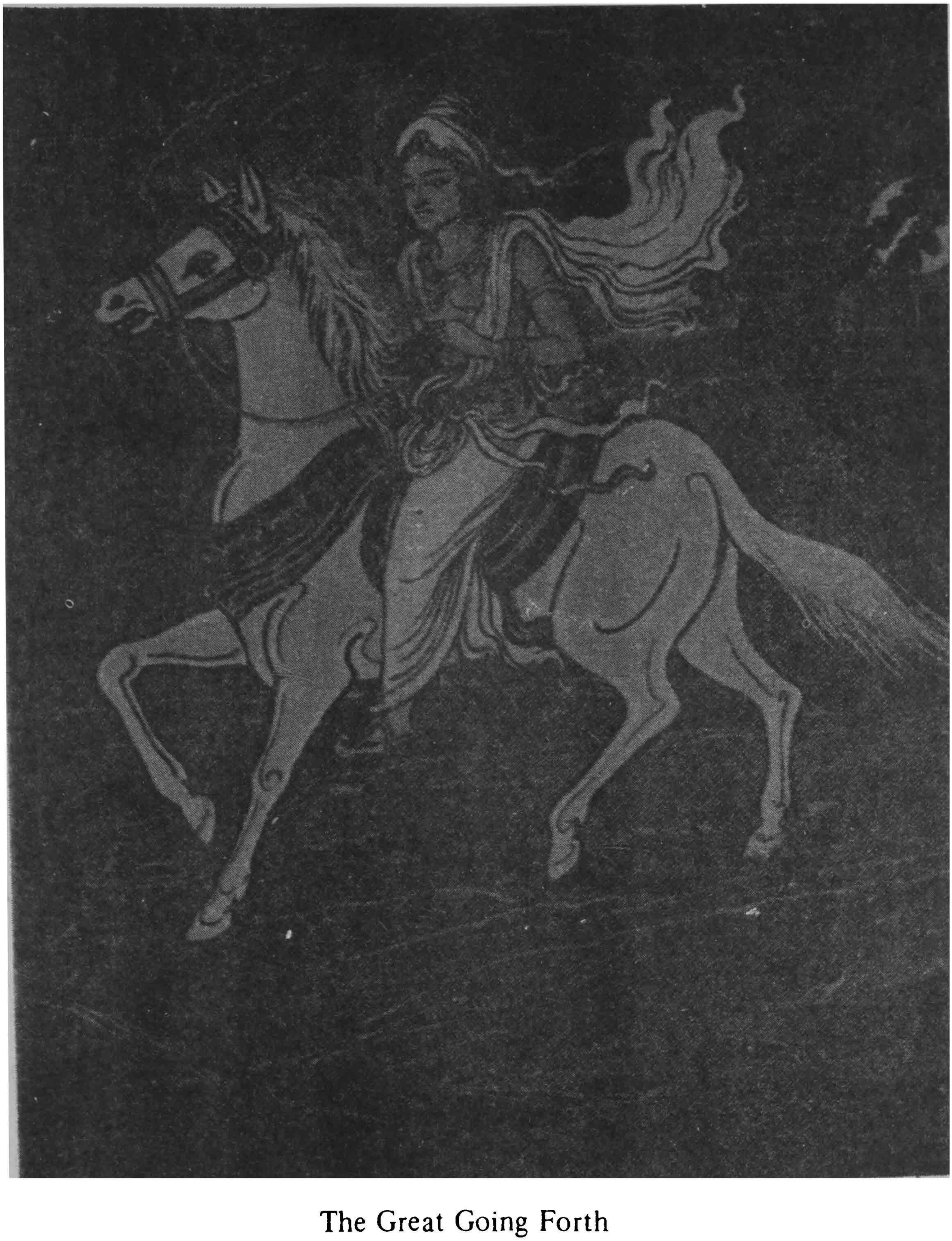
The horse looked very sad. Tears rolled down from its eyes. It kept its eyes fixed at the prince for a few moments. Later, the horse died of sorrow.

EXERCISE 11

1. *Whom did the king invite to attend the dinner party?*
2. *What was the prince doing while the party was going on?*
3. *What did he see when he woke up?*
4. *Where did he quietly go then?*
5. *What did he ask his driver to do?*
6. *Did he see his son's face? Why?*
7. *After crossing Anoma what did he ask the driver to do?*
8. *Why did Kanthaka refuse to return to the palace?*



Prince Siddharta Bids Farewell To His Sleeping Wife and Child



The Great Going Forth

LESSON 12

KING BIMBISARA'S OFFER

From the Anoma river, dressed as a beggar, the young prince wandered from place to place. Sometime later he came to Rajagaha city, where King Bimbisara lived. Here with his begging bowl in his hands Siddhartha walked round the streets of this city begging for food from door to door like any other religious monk.

Now he did not have a house to go to nor a friend to talk to nor food to eat. Therefore he ate whatever food was given to him by the people. People began to call him 'Sage' Some called him 'Ascetic' and some called him 'Ascetic Gotama', but nobody called him 'Prince Siddhartha' any more.

He was most handsome, very young, very healthy, very clean and neat. He spoke very kindly and gently. He did not ask people to give him anything. But people were very happy and pleased to put some food into his bowl.

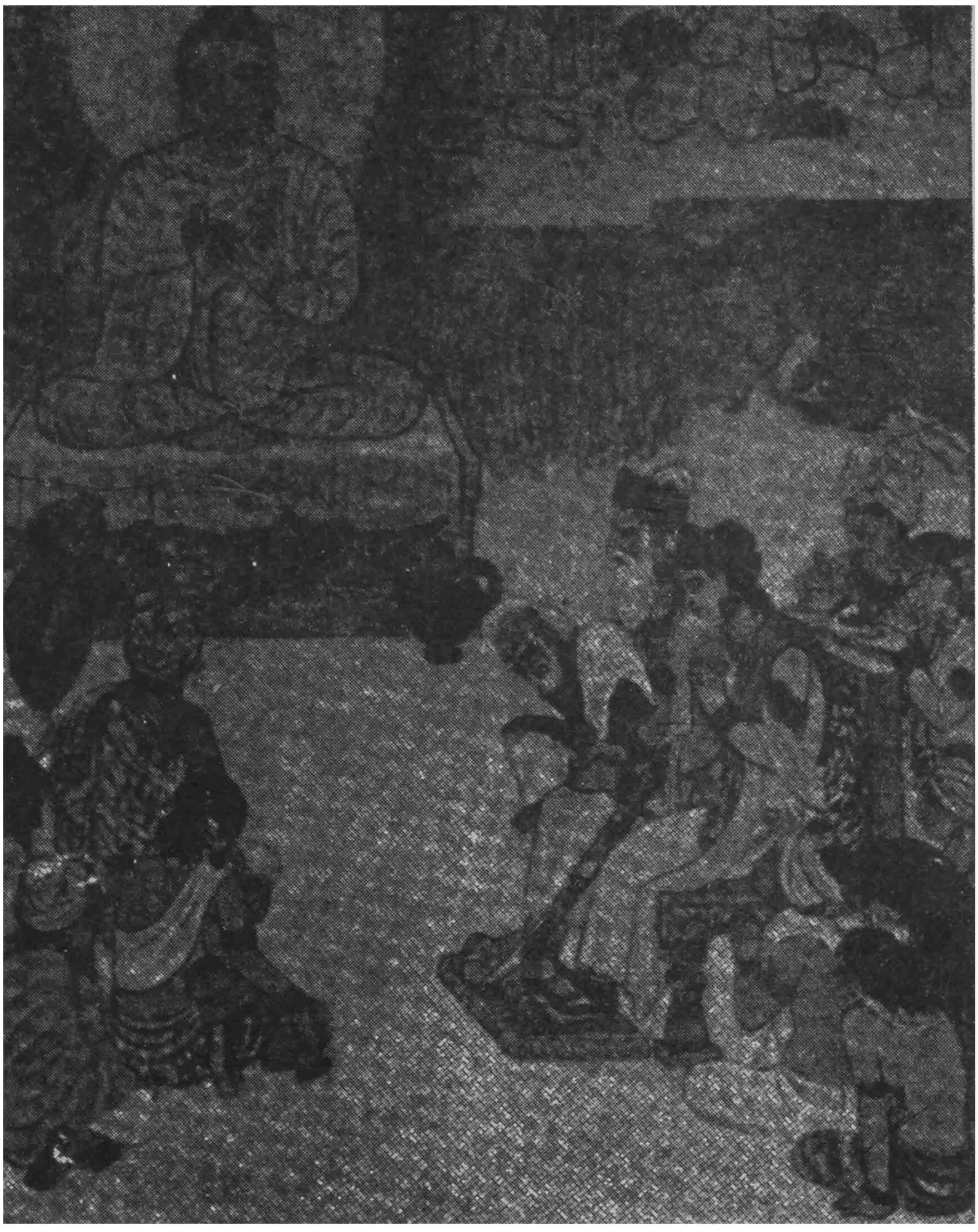
Some people went and told the king "Your majesty, there is a young man. Some people call him 'Ascetic Gotama'. He is very clean, neat, kind, polite and not like a beggar."

When King Bimbisara heard the name 'Gotama' at once he knew that this prince was the son of King Suddhodana, his friend. He went up to him and asked him, "Why do you do this? Have you quarrelled with your father? Why do you go about like this? Stay here and I shall give you half of my kingdom."

"Thank you very much, Sir, I love my parents, my wife, my son, you and everybody. I want to find out a way to stop old age, sickness, worries and death. Therefore I am going thus," said Ascetic Gotama and off he went.

EXERCISE 12

1. *Where did the prince go from the Anoma river?*
2. *What did people call him when he became a monk?*
3. *How did he get his food?*
4. *Who was Bimbisara?*
5. *What did he tell the prince?*
6. *What did Gotama tell the king?*
7. *Why were people happy to give him food?*



The Buddha Preaches To King Bimbisara

LESSON 13

ALARA AND UDDAKA

When Prince Siddhartha left his palace and a life of luxury, five of his friends who heard this, left their homes to become monks like him. One of them was Kondanna, the young wise man. In fact he was the cleverest of the lot. The other wise men were Bhaddiya, Wappa, Mahanama and Assaji. They, too, were wearing orange coloured robes and went from place to place begging for food.

At that time in India there were many religious teachers. The best and well known one was Alara Kalama. Ascetic Gotama went with his five friends to study under him. He stayed and learnt all that Alara could teach him very faithfully and obediently. He was the most hard working pupil and his master liked him very much as he was very clever too. Finally he could not teach him any more and he said:

"You are the same as I am now. There is no difference between us. Stay here and take my place and teach my pupils with me."

Ascetic Gotama was surprised and asked, "You cannot teach me more? Can you teach me the way to stop death, sickness and old age?"

"No," said Alara, "I cannot, for I do not know that myself. So how can I teach you that. There is none in the world who knows this."

Ascetic Gotama left him with his band of five friends. They wandered all over the country practising what they had learnt. At last they heard of another great teacher who was famous for his cleverness. He was called Uddaka. They went and learnt from him for sometime. Here too Ascetic Gotama learnt very obediently and became his best pupil.

Uddaka too, could not teach him how to stop suffering, old age and death and he too, had never heard of anyone who could solve these problems. Once again Ascetic Gotama was very disappointed and left Uddaka with his five friends and made up his mind to struggle by himself very hard until he found the cause of all the sufferings of life.

EXERCISE 13

1. *Who were the friends of Ascetic Gotama?*
2. *Who was their first teacher?*
3. *Why did they leave him?*
4. *What did the teacher tell Ascetic Gotama?*
5. *Whom did they meet next?*



LESSON 14

TORTURING THE BODY

After leaving Uddaka, Ascetic Gotama and his five friends wandered from place to place as before. He practised fasting which was thought to be one of the best ways to acquire wisdom. He, too, at the beginning took little food. Later on he only ate one meal a day for months. Then he took food once in two or three days. He was eating roots of plants, leaves and juice of various leaves and fruits. Because of the lack of proper food his body became so thin that his legs became like bamboo sticks, his backbone was like a rope, his rib-bones in the chest were like an uncompleted roof of a house, his eyes sank right inside, like a stone in a deep well. His skin was so dry and wrinkled that hairs were missing. In fact he looked like a living skeleton — all bones without any flesh! He suffered terrible pain and hunger and he thought that the only way to happiness was to be most unhappy now. He continued to meditate but still he did not know anything new.

Another way of torturing his body and mind was holding his breath for a long time until he felt terrible pains in the ears, head and the whole body. Then he began to be alone or practised loneliness. During the Full Moon and New Moon nights he went out to the forests, cemetery and other lonely places to meditate. He became frightened at first in these places, especially when wild animals came. But he never ran away from these places He stayed behind bravely in these dreadful places meditating all the time.

He used to wear rags or torn dirty clothes from grave-yards and rubbish heaps during this period. In the hot summer he stayed indoors at night and in the burning sun in the day time. In the cold winter at midnight he used to dip himself in the icy cold water and stay for a long time. This was to torture his body and mind even more and suffer even more than ever.

For six long years he did all these practices and in spite of the great pain and suffering he did not find out anything. He finally thought that this was not the way to find out wisdom. One day he fainted in a place called Uruvela. Then

a goat boy came and gave him some milk and that made him better. Soon he began to take more milk and food and built up his body. When the five friends saw that he was not fasting anymore, they felt disappointed and left him alone.

EXERCISE 14

1. *When the Ascetic Gotama was in the jungle for six years why did he become so thin?*
2. *How did his body look like?*
3. *What did he do in the summer?*
4. *What did he do in the winter?*
5. *What are the ways he used to torture his body?*
6. *How long did he do it?*
7. *Then finally why did he give it up?*
8. *Why did the five friends leave him?*
9. *Who give him milk when he fainted?*



LESSON 15

SUJATA GAVE HIM MILK-RICE

In a village called Senani there lived a young, very beautiful and rich girl who wanted to marry and have a son. She waited for many years and she was not successful. The people told her that she must go to a Banyan tree near Neranjara river and ask the tree-god to give her a husband and a lovely son. People at that time believed and prayed to trees and images for help She did as told by the people. Later on she got married to a young man and they had a lovely son. She was extremely happy and decided to fulfil her vow to that tree-god for giving her all that she had asked for. So on the day she wanted to fulfil the vow she sent her servant to the tree to clean the foot of the Banyan tree.

This young and beautiful lady's name was Sujata. She had a thousand cows and she fed them with sweet creepers called Valmee so that the cow's milk was sweet. Then she milked the thousand cows and fed that milk to five hundred cows and their milk to two hundred and fifty cows and so on until she fed only eight cows. She did this to get the sweetest and most nourishing milk to make the delicious milk-rice for the tree-god. She then cooked the rice in this milk. Suddenly she was surprised to see her servant running and coming to her very happy and excited and said:

"O! my lady Sujata, the Banyan tree-god himself has come down from the tree for your food. He is seated under the tree meditating. How lucky you must be to have the god in person to accept your food."

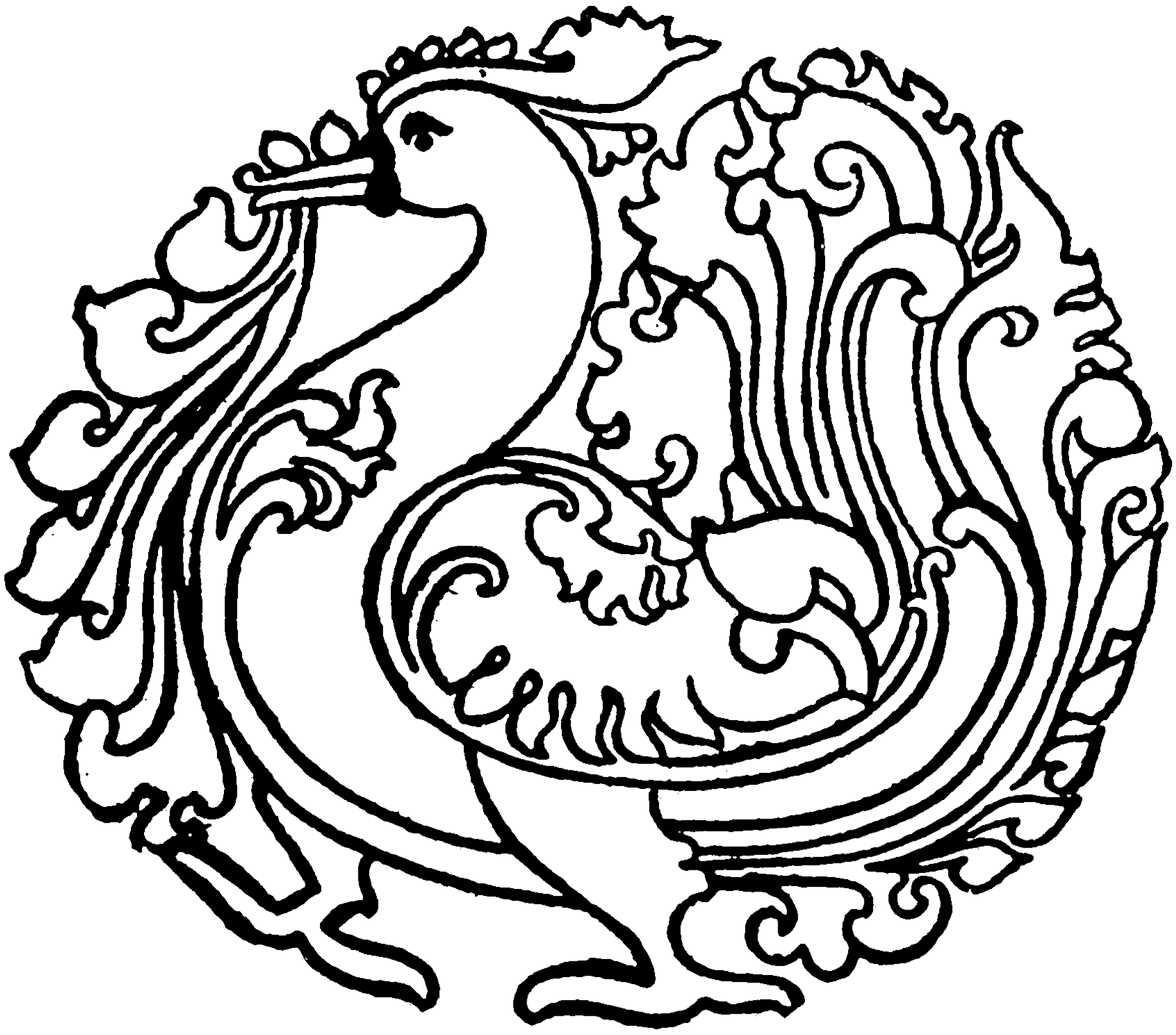
Sujata too was very happy and excited. She danced with joy with the servant. They then took even more pains to prepare the milk-rice.

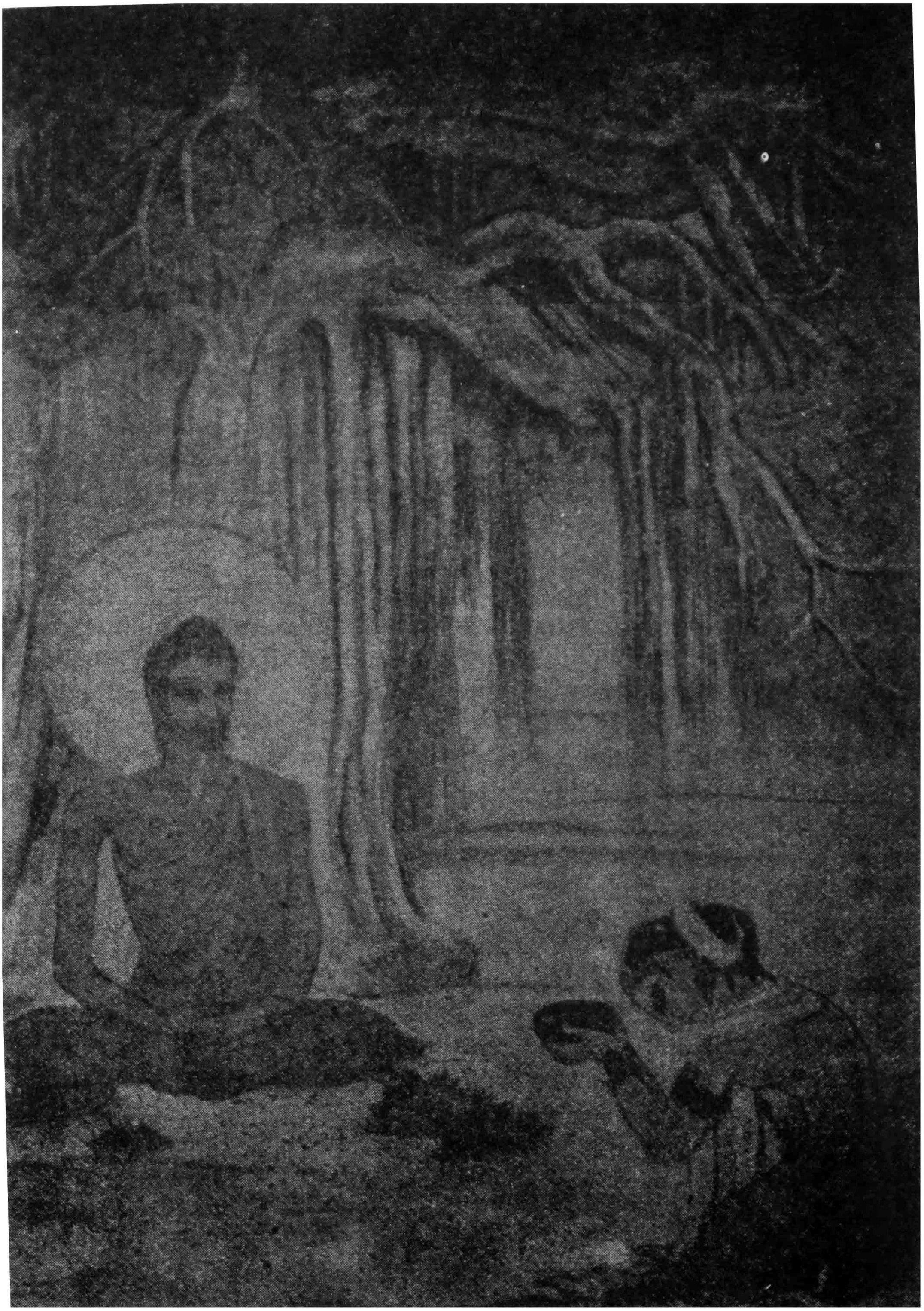
Taking with them the delicious milk-rice both of them went towards the Banyan tree. Sujata was so surprised and excited to see her tree-god himself — who was so handsome-looking so serene, sitting and meditating. She did not know that he was in fact Ascetic Gotama. While she was putting the delicious milk-rice in his bowl she said, "May you be successful in obtaining your wishes as I have been."

Ascetic Gotama ate the food and then with the empty bowl in his hand, crossed the river Neranjara on the way to Gaya.

EXERCISE 15

1. *What is the name of the lady who gave him food?*
2. *Where did she live?*
3. *What did she want from the tree-god?*
4. *How did she prepare the milk-rice?*
5. *What did her servant see under the Banyan tree?*
6. *Where did Ascetic Gotama go after eating the milk-rice?*





The Prince Mendicant accepts an offering of Milk-Rice from Sujata

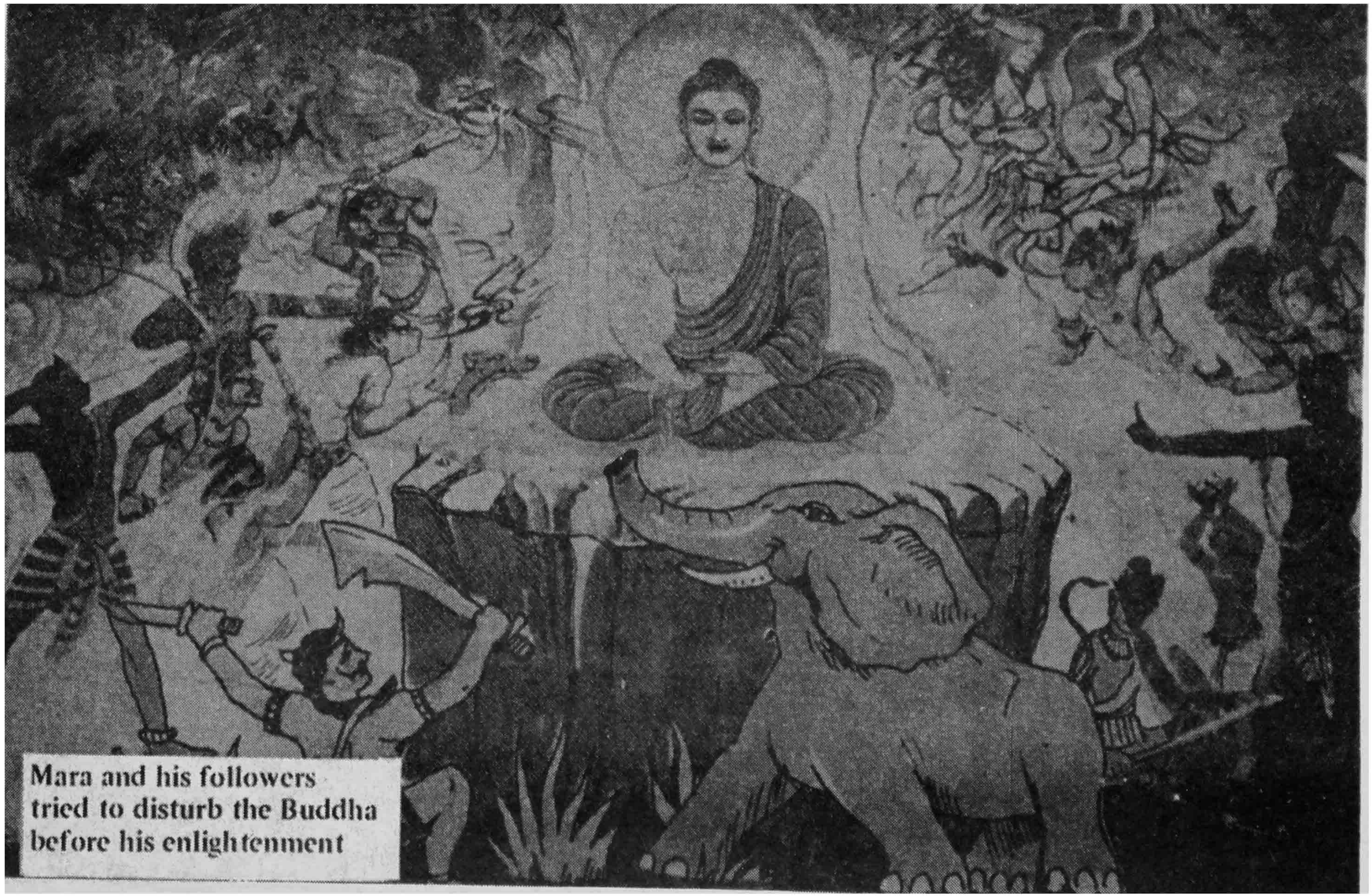
LESSON 16

ENLIGHTENMENT — BUDDHAHOOD

In the evening after Sujata's lovely meal he went to Gaya and looked for a suitable place to sit down and meditate. He sat under a tree called the Bodhi tree with his face to the East and made an earnest wish with very strong determination that "Though my skin, my nerves and my bones, shall waste away and my life blood go dry I will not leave this seat until I have attained the highest wisdom called supreme Enlightenment that leads to Everlasting Happiness."

So he practised the concentration (deep thinking) of breathing in and breathing out on this Wesak Full Moon eve. During this period of concentration on the breathing in and breathing out many evil thoughts began to come to his mind — desire for worldly things, dislike for a holy pure and good life, hunger and thirst, feeling of great thirst and hunger; craving — the intense desire or liking, longing for all things, laziness and idleness; fear of things like devils, evil spirits, doubt, stupidity, stubbornness, wish to have everything for oneself; wish to be praised and honoured and to do things for fame; thinking very highly about oneself and looking down upon others. These thoughts began to disturb his concentration; but he was more firm than ever. He became more calm and brave and continued his concentration. At last he destroyed all these thoughts during the earlier part of the night and got the power of seeing his own past lives.

In the second part of the night he got the power of seeing the death of living beings and their rebirth and in the third part of the night — in the following morning — he got the power of understanding the cause of all evil and how to get rid of them. Thus he became the wisest person in the world who could answer all the questions that everybody put to him. All the answers to the questions lodged in his mind for so many years were then found. He knew how to end sorrow, unhappiness, suffering, old age and death. He also found out the real peace, happiness and freedom. He knew everything more than Man could ever know and he became perfect.



Mara and his followers tried to disturb the Buddha before his enlightenment

EXERCISE 16

1. *Where did the Ascetic Gotama go after taking Sujata's milk-rice?*

2. *What do you call the tree under which he meditated?*

3. *On what day did he begin to practise meditation?*

4. *What was the determination he made under the tree?*

5. *What did he do when he was meditating?*

6. *What sort of thoughts came to his mind?*

7. *What did he realise in the first part of the night?*

8. *What did he know in the second part of the night?*

9. *What did he come to know in the third part of the night?*

10. *What do you call him now?*





Enlightenment

LESSON 17

SEVEN WEEKS AFTER THE ENLIGHTENMENT

1. UNDER THE BODHI TREE:

During the whole of the 1st week, the Buddha sat under the Bodhi tree enjoying the happiness of freedom or the joy of everlasting peace. He was then free from disturbing thoughts.

2. GAZING AT THE TREE:

During the second week, as a great deed of thankfulness or gratitude to the Bodhi tree which sheltered Him during His struggle for Buddhahood, He stood a few feet from the Bodhi tree gazing or looking at the tree without moving His eyes for the whole week. He was meditating on the Bodhi tree.

Following this noble example all Buddhists still pay respect or homage to, not only the original Bodhi tree, but also its descendants.

3. GOLDEN BRIDGE:

He again mediatated during the third week. Lord Buddha saw through His mind's eye and knew that the Devas in the heavens were not sure whether he had attained Enlightenment completely as He continued to stay there. Then to prove His Enlightenment to them the Buddha creafed a golden bridge in the air and walked up and down for the whole week.

4. JEWELLED CHAMBER:

In the fourth week, He created a beautiful jewelled chamber and sitting inside it meditated on the Higher Teaching, or ABIDHAMMA. His mind and body were so purified that six coloured rays came out of his body. They were blue, yellow, red, white, orange and mixture of these five. Today these six colours form the Buddhist flag. In fact that week onwards all the six colours were round his whole body. Each colour represented

one noble quality of the Buddha. Yellow for Holiness, white for purity, blue for confidence, red for wisdom. orange for desirelessness and the mixed colour represented all these very noble qualities and we too, if we develop our minds and bodies to a high degree of purity, can gain these colours.

5. THREE GIRLS

During this week, the fifth week, while he was enjoying the joys of freedom sitting under the famous Ajapala Banyan Tree near the Bodhi tree, three most beautiful and charming girls called Tanha, Rati and Raga came to disturb his meditation by dancing in the most seducive and charming manner. They did everything to tempt Lord Buddha to watch their dance. He just shut his eyes and continued his meditation and many hours later they felt so tired that they left him in peace.

6. MUCALINDA (TREE)

He went and meditated at the foot of another tree called the Mucalinda tree. As it was raining very heavily a huge king cobra came and coiled his body seven times round the Buddha's body, but kept his hood over the Buddha's head so that the Buddha was protected from getting wet by the heavy rain. When the rain stopped, the snake became a young man and paid his respects to Lord Buddha. This snake was supposed to be a supernatural being. Then the Buddha said:

"Happy is he who is contented. Happiness is for him who has heard the truth and for him who sees the truth. Happy is he who has goodwill in this world towards beings. Happy is who lives in this world with non-attachment, passing beyond sense-desires. The disappearance of the "I am conceit is indeed the highest happiness."

SEVEN WEEKS AFTER THE ENLIGHTENMENT



The Buddha spent one week at each of the Seven places shown, after His Enlightenment.

7. RAJAYATANA TREE:

During the seventh week He was meditating under a tree called the Rajayatana tree.

On the 50th morning, after His long fast for seven weeks, two merchants came to His presence. They were called Tapussa and Bhallika. In fact, they were going in a different direction to another city. Tapussa and Bhallika offered the Buddha rice-cakes and honey.

The two merchants, by taking the two Refuges—in the Buddha and the Dhamma, became the first lay followers of the Buddha. There was no Sangha or Order of Monks then. They requested the Buddha for something sacred to keep with them. The Buddha wiped His head with His right hand and got some hair and gave these to them. This hair was called Kesa Datu (Hair Relics). With this sacred Hair Relics, Tapassu and Bhallika left the place. Later when they reached their hometown they built pagodas and enshrined these sacred Hair Relics in them.

After His meal, the Buddha began to contemplate. He was reluctant to teach His Dhamma to the people. He thought people would not be able to understand His noble and deep teaching for they were very ignorant. Then Brahma Sahampati — Lord of the Three World's (Human, Deva, and Brahma worlds) came and requested Him to preach the Dhamma to all. The Buddha compassionately accepted this invitation to expound the Dhamma

EXERCISE 17

1. *What did the Buddha do during the third week?*
2. *Who visited the Buddha during the fifth week?*
3. *How long did He fast and why did He not feel hungry?*
4. *What did He do during the first week after Enlightenment?*
5. *Who became the first two lay disciples of the Buddha?*
6. *Why was the Buddha reluctant to teach the Dhamma?*
7. *What colours is the Buddhist flag composed of?*
8. *What does each colour signify?*

LESSON 18

MEETING THE FIVE FRIENDS

Now the Buddha wanted to tell other people how to become wise, good and do service to others. On the fiftieth day the Buddha thought "Now Asita, Alara and Uddaka are dead. I cannot tell them what I know. But my friends — Kondanna, Bhaddiya, Wappa, Mahanama and Assaji are in Benares. I must go there and preach to them."

Then He set out to walk to Benares about a hundred miles to tell them what He had found. And wandering day after day from place to place, at last one evening, He came near the grove where those five ascetics were staying. This grove was called the "Deer Park".

They saw Him coming towards them and one said to another, "Look yonder! There is that ascetic Gotama coming here -- a luxury-loving fellow who gave up fasting and fell back into a life of ease and comfort. Don't let us speak to Him! Don't let us show Him any respect! Let nobody go and offer to take His bowl or His extra robe from Him. We'll just leave a mat there for Him to sit on if He wants to. and if He doesn't want, He can stand. Who is going to attend on a good-for-nothing ascetic like Him!"

However, as the Buddha came nearer and nearer, they began to notice that somehow He was not the same as He used to be in the days when they had lived with Him and studied under Him. Now there was something about Him, something noble and majestic such as they never had seen before. And almost in spite of themselves, before they well knew what they were doing, they had forgotten all they had just agreed on as to how they were going to receive Him. And one was hastening forward to meet Him, and respectfully taking His bowl and robe from Him, another busily preparing a seat for Him, while a third hurried off and brought Him water to wash His feet.

After He had taken the seat the Buddha spoke to them and said: "Listen, ascetics. I have found the way to deathlessness. Let me tell you. Let me teach you. And if you listen and learn and practise as I tell you, very soon you will know for yourselves not in some future life but here and now in this present lifetime that what I say is true. You will realise for yourselves the state that is beyond all living and death."

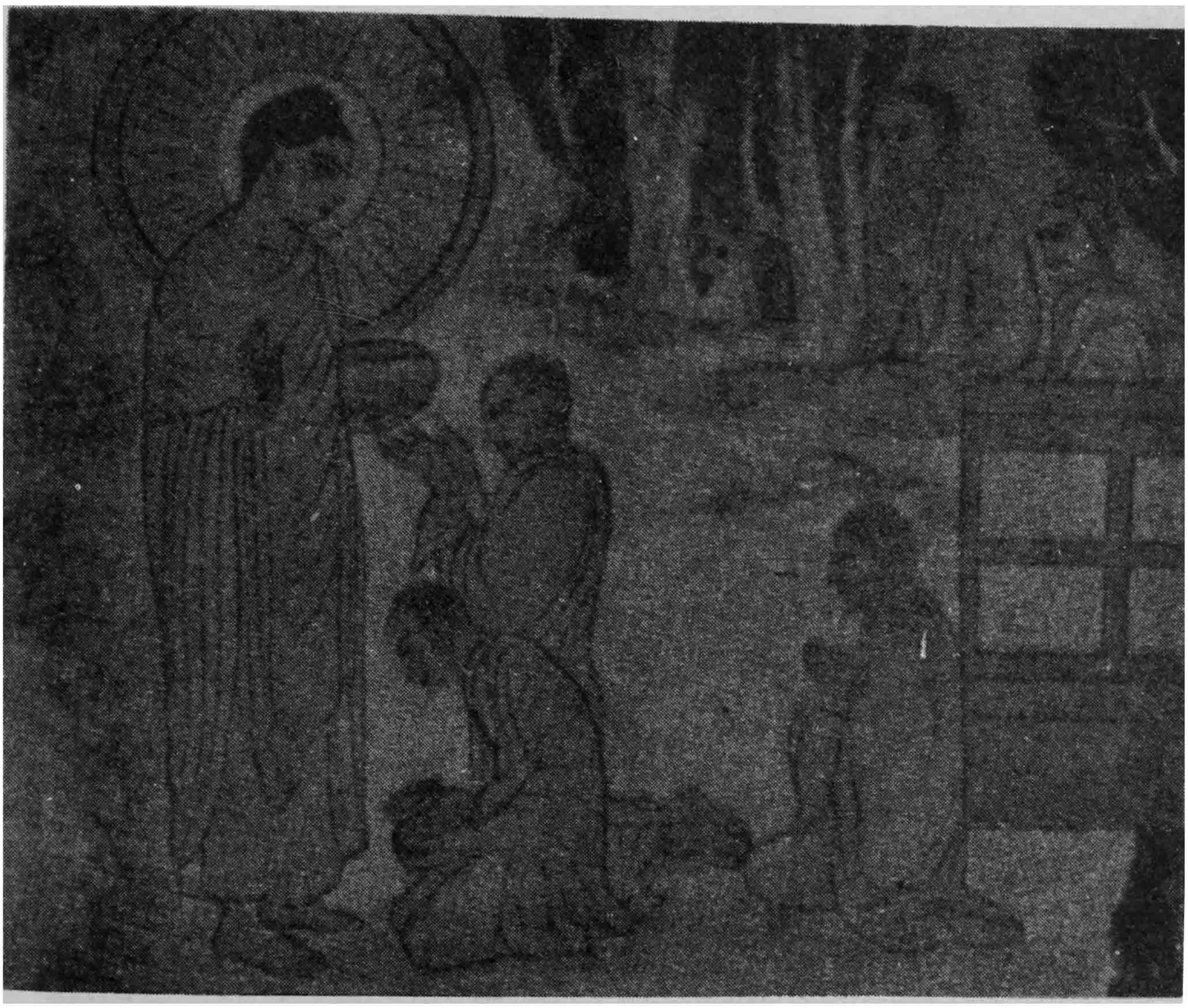
Naturally the five ascetics were very much astonished to hear their old master and teacher talking like this. They had seen Him giving up His hard life of fasting; they had seen Him stop from all efforts to find the Truth, and here He was actually coming to them and telling them that He had found the Turth! They simply did not believe Him; and they told Him so. "Why, friend Gotama," said they, "when we were living with you, you practised all sorts of stern bodily mortifications such as were practised by no other ascetic we ever heard of in the whole of India, and that was why we took you for our master and teacher. Yet with all you did, you never found out the Truth you wanted to find. How is it possible you can have found it now when you are living a life of luxury, have ceased from striving, and have turned to live in ease and comfort?"

But the Buddha replied, "You are mistaken, ascetics. I have not given up all efforts. I am not living a life of selfindulgence and idle comfort and ease. Listen to me. I really have attained supreme knowledge and insight. And I can teach it to you so that you also may attain it and possess it for yourselves."

When the five monks were willing to listen to Him, He delivered His first sermon to these five ascetics. Here in this sermon, the Buddha advised his followers to avoid two extremes such as self-indulgence and self-torture and to practise his teachings. He also advised them to understand the four Noble Truths and to practise the Nobel Path, or to lead a Buddhist way of life.

EXERCISE 18

1. *Whom did the Buddha want to preach to first?*
2. *Where did he go then?*
3. *Why did he go there?*
4. *What did they want to do?*
5. *Did they keep their word?*
6. *Why did they change when the Buddha went there?*
7. *What did the Buddha tell them?*
8. *Did they believe Him?*



The Buddha meets his Former Disciples at Sarnath



The First Discourse.

LESSON 19

YASA AND HIS FIFTY-FOUR FRIENDS

The Buddha preached to those five friends so that they may attain everlasting happiness. Kondanna, the wisest of the five, listened to Him very attentively and understood the whole teaching of the Buddha. All of them remained there for a short period.

While the Buddha was thus staying in the Deer Park at Isipatana, Benares, there came to see Him a rich young man of the neighbourhood, called Yasa. And after the young Yasa had heard the Buddha explain His teaching and what it led to, he was so pleased with what he heard that he became a Bhikkhu (monk) in order to hear and learn more.

But towards evening, that day, an elderly man came to where the Buddha was, and told Him that his son had left home that morning saying he was going to visit the Buddha, but he had not come home again, and his mother was crying, thinking that he must have been killed by robbers on the way. Then the Buddha told the man that his son had become a Bhikkhu and He began to explain His teaching to the new Bhikkhu's father. And so well did He speak that when He had ended, the father also asked to be His follower. The Buddha made him His follower.

Yasa's father was a millionaire and he invited the Buddha and the other six monks to take lunch in his house. The Buddha accepted the invitation and went to his house. After lunch the Buddha preached to Yasa's mother and Yasa's former wife.

Yasa had fifty-four friends. They also were present to see the Buddha and they saw Yasa as a monk. When they heard the preaching of the Buddha they also told the Buddha that they wanted to become monks like Yasa himself. The Buddha agreed and made them monks. In this way within a short time there were sixty monks.

EXERCISE 19

1. *Who were the first five monks of the Buddha?*

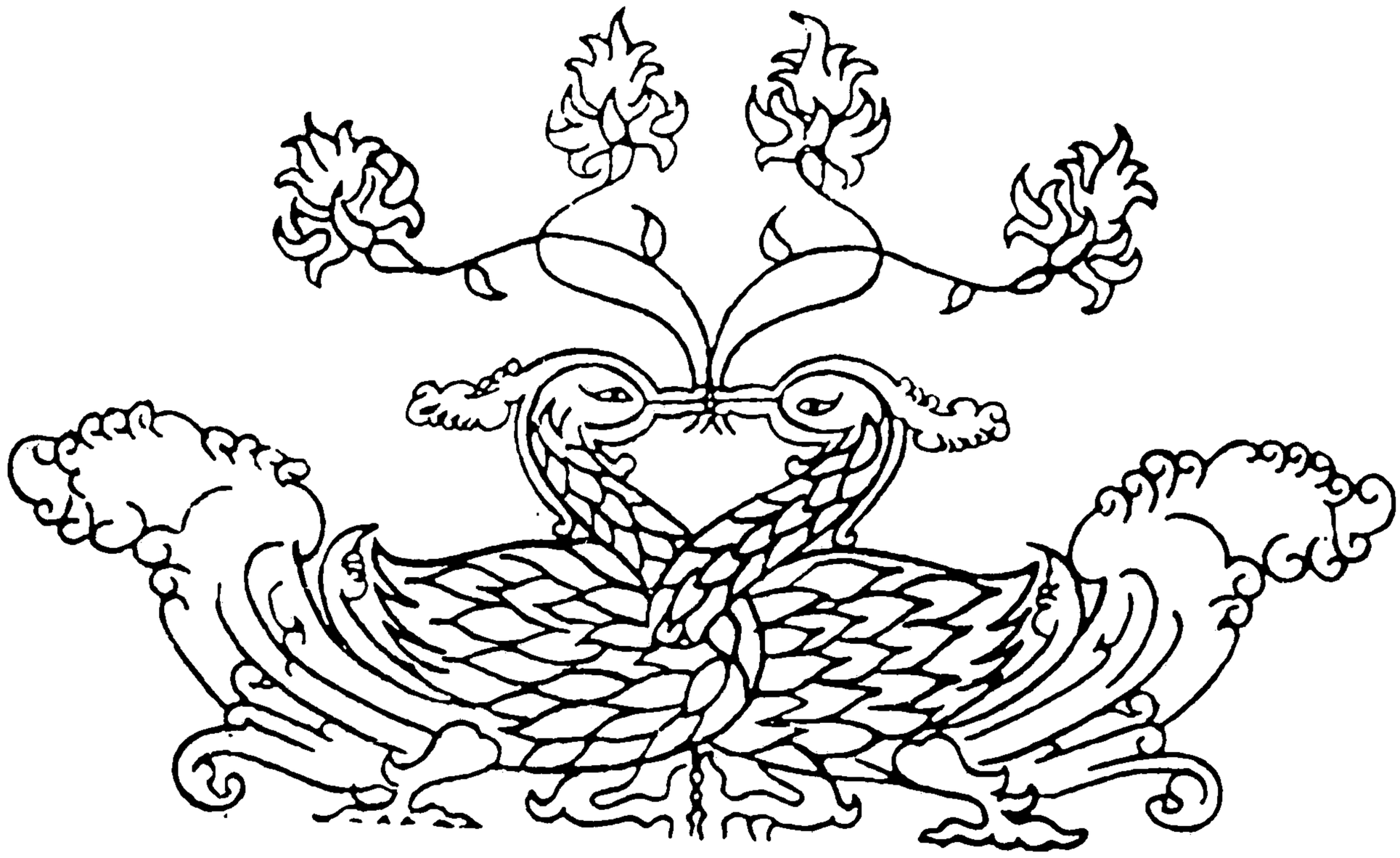
2. *Who came to understand the Buddha's teaching first?*

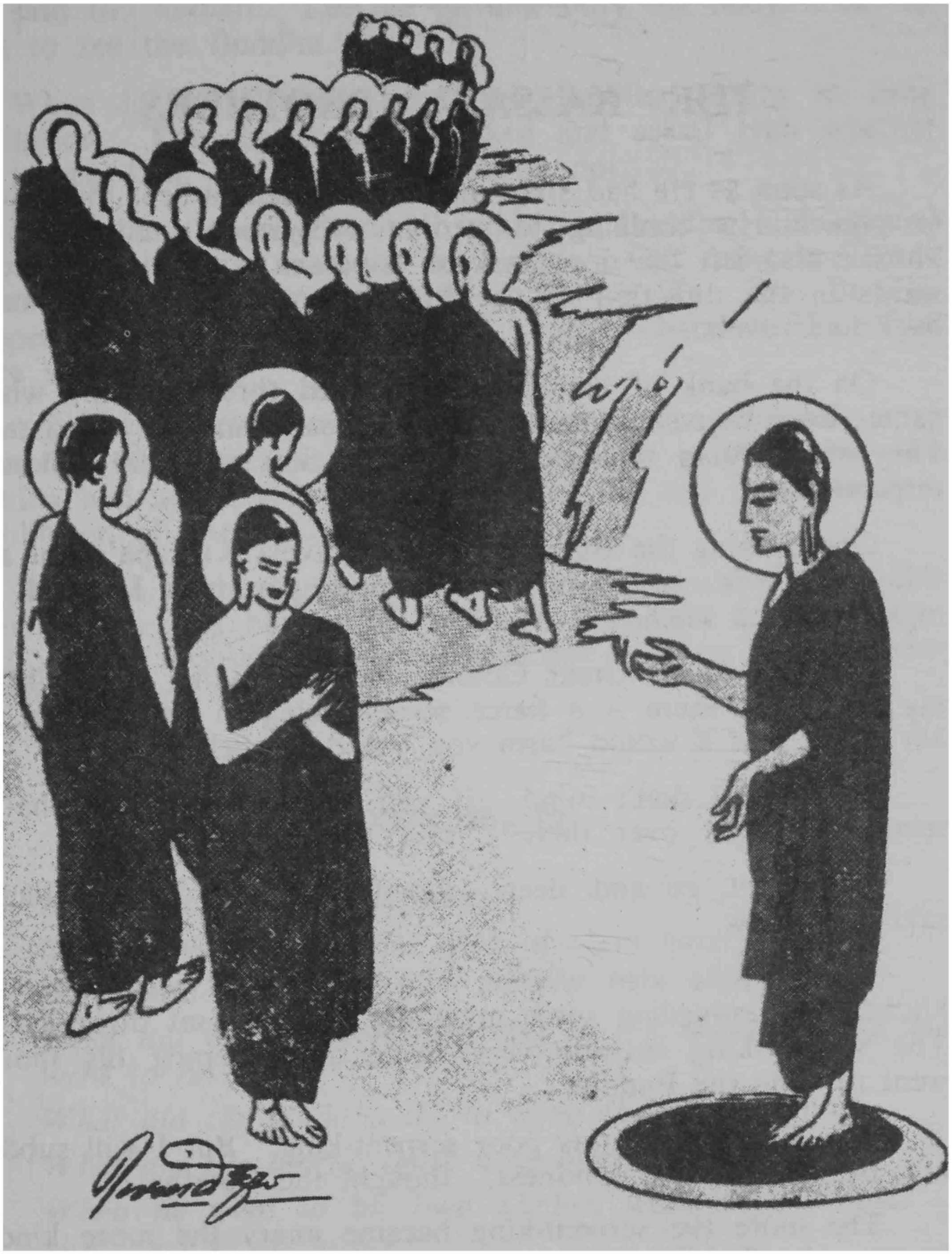
3. *Who was Yasa?*

4. *What did he say to the Buddha when he heard the teaching?*

5. *What did his father do when he heard that Yasa became a monk?*

6. *Who were the sixty monks?*





For the first time in the world, well-trained monks were sent out by the Buddha throughout the country to teach the people how to lead a decent and noble life

LESSON 20

THE KASSAPA BROTHERS

As soon as He had sixty monks the Buddha sent them away to preach His teaching to people everywhere and then He himself also left the deer park at Isipatana, and turning South-wards in the direction of the Magadha country, at last came back to Uruvela.

On the bank of the river there lived three brothers whose names were Uruvela Kassapa, Nadi Kassapa and Gaya Kassapa. They were living separately with 500, 300 and 200 followers respectively.

One evening the Buddha visited Uruvela Kassapa's hut and said; "If it is not an inconvenience to you may I spend the night in your kitchen?"

"I don't mind, Great Gotama, your spending the night in my hut. But there is a fierce serpent king in the kitchen. I am afraid that it would harm you," said Uruvela Kassapa.

"O! that I don't mind. If you have no objection shall I spend the night over there?" said the Buddha.

"All right, go and sleep. Good night and best of luck." said the ascetic.

The Buddha also wishing him good night went into the kitchen and spreading some grass on the floor sat down on it. The serpent-king became very fierce and opening his mouth went to sting the Buddha.

"I will not harm this poor serpent-king. But I will subdue him by my love and kindness." thought the Buddha.

The more the serpent-king became angry the more kindly became the Buddha. The serpent-king could not do any harm to the Buddha. Early in the next morning the ascetic thought that the Buddha might have been killed by the serpent-king

and said to himself, "Let me go and bury his body." So he went to see the Buddha.

When he went there he found Buddha sitting in deep meditation. The ascetic was shocked and asked Him whether the serpent-king had harmed Him or not.

"Here it is, see yourself," said the Buddha and opened His begging bowl in front of the ascetic. Out came the fierce serpent-king. The ascetic ran away for his life. The Buddha stopped him and said that He had a great charm to tame any fierce serpent.

"Can I too learn it?" asked the ascetic who was very proud of his power at the beginning. He realised that the Buddha had acquired greater power than he and so he became a follower of the Buddha.

As soon as his younger brothers came to know that their elder brother had become a Buddhist, they too, followed him. And all the thousand followers of these brothers also became Buddhists.

EXERCISE 20

1. *Who were the three brothers?*
2. *How many followers did each of them have?*
3. *Where did they live?*
4. *What did the eldest brother say to the Buddha when He went to his hut?*
5. *What did the Buddha do to tame the serpent-king?*
6. *What did the ascetic think next morning?*
7. *When he went to his own kitchen what did he find?*
8. *What did he do then?*
9. *What was the Buddha's power?*
10. *What did the other brothers do when they heard that their elder brother became a Buddhist?*

LESSON 21

RETURNING HOME

When King Suddhodana came to know that the Buddha was preaching in Rajagaha he sent nine messengers, one after another, inviting him to come to Kapilavatthu. All the messengers became monks under the Buddha. The Buddha's teachings were so appealing to them that they wished to listen to more of his teachings and they forgot to convey the King's message.

The King also had made arrangements for the Buddha to stay in a park named Nigrodha. But when the Buddha did not come, the King sent Kaludayi who was a playmate of the Buddha to invite the Buddha. Then only, the Buddha received the message and agreed to go to the palace.

When the people of Kapilavatthu came to know that the Buddha had come to their city all of them flocked to the city to see the Buddha, and the Prince Siddhartha's own relatives said, "He is our younger brother, our nephew, our grandson." They asked their younger ones, "You go forward and respect him. We will sit behind you."

Then the Buddha realised that some people even then, did not understand that He was already Enlightened but felt they were His elders. He showed them a miracle called the "Twin miracle". The King seeing this miracle worshipped him.

The next day, He took his begging bowl and went from door to door asking for food. The King was very annoyed when he saw his son begging in the street. He ran to Him and said, "Why do you disgrace me, my son? Why do you ruin me like this? Why don't you take food in the palace? Is it proper for you to beg food in this very city where you used to travel in golden sedan chairs? Why do you put me to shame, my dear son?"

"I am not putting you to shame, O Great King This is our custom," said the Buddha calmly.

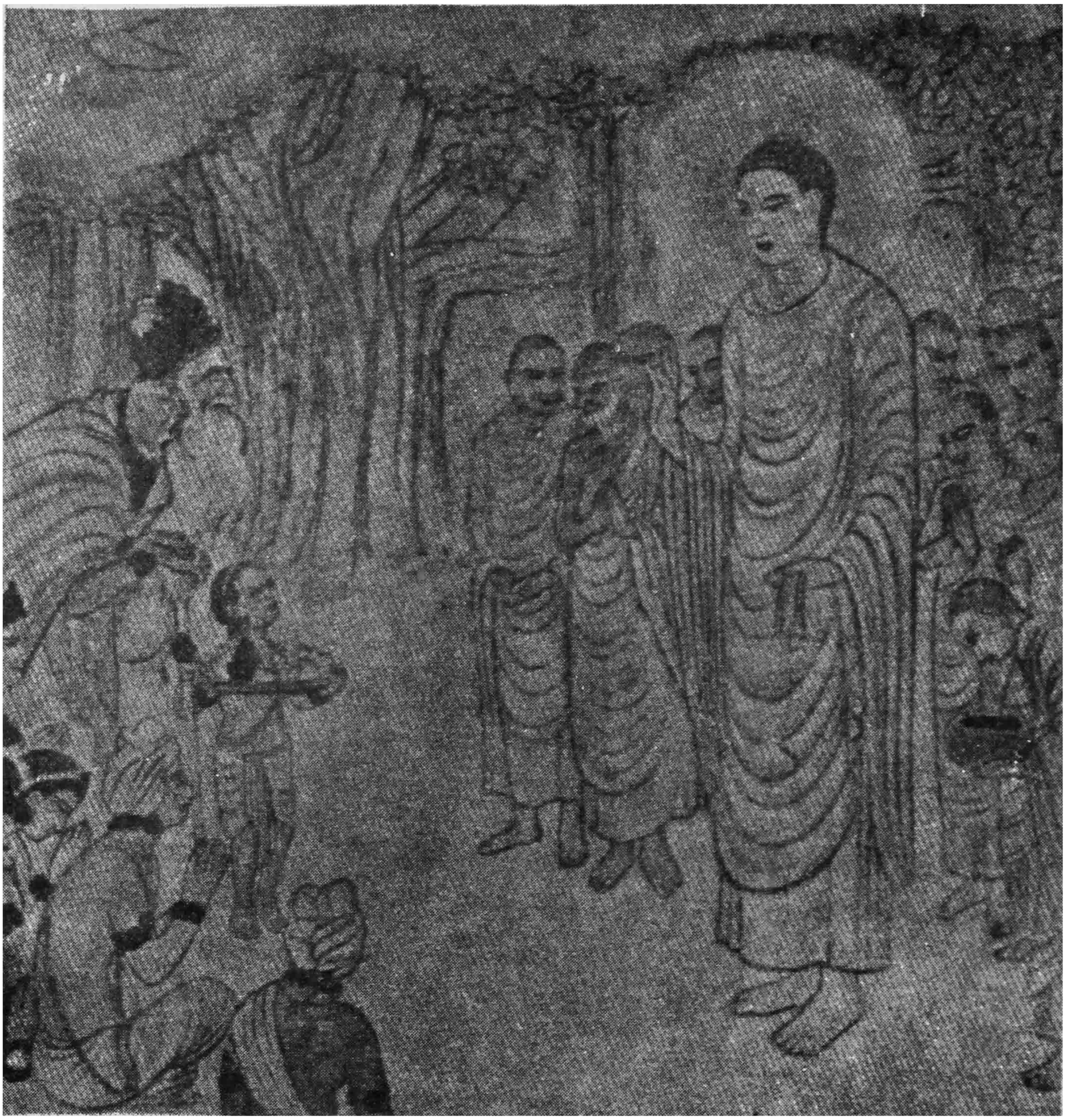
"How can it be? Nobody in our family had ever to beg like this. How can you say "it is our custom?".

"O Great King, that is not the custom of your Royal family. But it is the custom of the Buddhas. All the former Buddhas have lived by receiving their food like this."

However when the king begged Him to take food in the palace, the Buddha went into the palace to take food.

EXERCISE 21

1. *Where was the Buddha when the king sent him messengers?*
2. *How many messengers did he send?*
3. *Why did they not tell Him the message?*
4. *At last who did go there?*
5. *Where had the king arranged for Him to stay?*
6. *What did the elderly people do when He came?*
7. *What did the Buddha do to show His greatness?*
8. *Why was the King not happy, the next day?*
9. *What did King Suddhodana ask the Buddha about the custom of his people?*
10. *What was the Buddha's reply?*



AFTER SEVEN YEARS THE BUDDHA GREETS HIS FATHER AT KAPILAVASTU

LESSON 22

PRINCESS YASODHARA

When the Buddha had taken His meal all who knew him as Prince Siddhartha except Yasodhara, came to talk and respect Him. All of them were still surprised but were very happy to see their beloved prince now in an orange coloured robe. respected by everybody, loved and worshipped by everybody.

But Yasodhara was in her room thinking, "Prince Siddhartha is now an Enlightened One — a Buddha. He now belongs to the line of Buddhas. Is it right for me, to go to him? He does not, and cannot need me. Is it right for me to go to him?' I think it is better to wait and see. If he comes here, then I will pay him the respect he deserves."

After a while the Buddha asked, "Where is Yasodhara?"

"She is in her room," said His father.

"Come, let us go there," said the Buddha and giving His bowl to the king went to her room. As He entered the room the Buddha said, "Let her pay me respect as she likes. Say nothing."

When Yasodhara knew that the Buddha was coming to her room, she ordered her servant girls to wear yellow robes and to welcome Him. And as the Buddha entered her room and before He took His seat she came quickly to Him and holding His ankles, placed her head on His feet and cried and cried until His feet were wet with her tears. The Buddha kept quiet and nobody stopped her until she was very tired of crying. Then she cleaned the Buddha's feet and sat down respectfully.

When she had sat down, her father-in-law, King Suddhodana said:

"Lord, when my daughter-in-law heard that you were wearing yellow robes, she also robed herself in yellow; when she heard that you were taking one meal a day, she also did the same: when she heard that you had given up lofty couches, she lay on a low couch; when she heard that you had given up garlands and scents, she also gave them up; when her relatives sent messages to say that they would maintain her, she would not even look at anyone. So virtuous was my daughter-in-law."

"Not only in this last birth O King, but in a previous birth, too, she protected me and was devoted and faithful to me," said the Buddha and told him the story of the Candakinnara Jataka – one of the previous Birth Stories.

EXERCISE 22

1. *What did the people do when the Buddha had taken His meal?*
2. *Who was not present there to respect the Buddha?*
3. *What did Yasodhara do when she knew that the Buddha was coming to see her?*
4. *When He was in her room what did she do?*
5. *Why did she do that?*
6. *What did the king say then?*
7. *Did the Buddha believe him and what did He say then?*





The Princess Yasodhara pays respect to the Buddha.

LESSON 23

PRINCE NANDA

Prince Nanda was the step-brother of the Prince Siddhartha. When he was thirty-five years old King Suddhodana wished to give him Prince Siddhartha's place in the palace, marry him to Princess Janapada Kalyani and let him live in a separate palace. The king wished to have all these festivals on the same day and waited for the Buddha to return to Kapilavatthu and bless Nanda and Janapada Kalyani. On the third day after the Buddha's return to Kapilavatthu he made all the arrangements for the festivals and invited the Buddha to attend the wedding. The Buddha went there, had lunch, blessed all of them and handed His begging bowl to Nanda and went away.

Nanda thought, "The Lord Buddha will take the bowl at the door step." But the Buddha went straight on without taking the bowl. Then Nanda thought, "He will take it at the palace gate." His bride, Janapada Kalyani, also saw Nanda following the Buddha and thought, "My husband may be going to the temple to send the Buddha off." Then she said, "Darling, don't be late, return quickly." When Prince Nanda went to the temple to return the bowl the Buddha asked him, "Nanda, do you like to be a monk?"

"Yes, Sir," said Nanda and the Buddha ordained him. But Nanda was afterwards very sad and unhappy. He was always thinking of his beautiful bride. Other monks saw him very sad and asked Nanda. "Why are you so sad, Nanda?"

"Brothers, I am disappointed. I do not like this monk's life. I want to leave it and go home," was Nanda's reply.

They went and reported this matter to the Buddha. The Buddha showed him a charred she-monkey and then some fairies and asked him, "Nanda, which is more beautiful and charming — your noble wife or these fairies?"

"Venerable Sir, Janapada Kalyani is like the charred she-monkey when compared to these fairies who are more beautiful and charming."

"Cheer up, Nanda, I guarantee that you will possess them if you work hard as I tell you."

In that case I shall take the greatest pleasure in living the monk's life." said Nanda and began to follow the Buddha's teaching very carefully and in a short time he realised the Truth of life destroying all kinds of desires and became so wise and holy that he did not want to go home any more.



Prince Nanda follows the Buddha carrying the Buddha's alms-bowl

EXERCISE 23

1. *Who was Nanda?*
2. *How old was he when the king made arrangements to celebrate the three festivals?*
3. *Whom did he wait for?*
4. *What did the Buddha do when He had taken His lunch?*
5. *What did Nanda think then?*
6. *Did his bride know that her husband was going with the Buddha?*
7. *Was Nanda happy with the monk's life? Why?*
8. *How did the Buddha make him happy?*



The Buddha going out
for begging His food.

LESSON 24

PRINCE RAHULA

On the day the Prince left the palace Rahula was born and now he was seven years old. He was brought up by his mother and grandfather. On the seventh day after His home-coming Princess Yasodhara gaily dressed up young Rahula. Then she pointed to the Buddha who was then having His meal, said to Rahula,. "Darling, can you tell me who is that?"

"He is the Buddha, mother," said Rahula.

The mother's eyes were filled with tears and she said, "Darling, that golden coloured ascetic, looking like Brahma, surrounded by twenty thousand ascetics was your father, and He had great property. Since He left home, we do not know what has happened to it. Go up to him and ask for your presents and say, "Father, I am the prince. When I become the king I will be a king of kings. I want property, for the son is the owner of what belongs to the father."

Innocent Rahula came to the Buddha, held one of His fingers, looked up at His face and telling Him all that his mother had asked him to say, said, "Father, even your shadow is pleasing to me."

After the meal the Buddha left the palace and Rahula followed Him, saying, "Give me my inheritance, I am going to be the king; I want wealth; you have plenty of them; please father, give me my inheritance." Nobody tried to stop him. Nor even the Buddha stopped him following Him. Coming to the park the Buddha thought, "He desires his father's wealth, but this goes with the world and is full of trouble. I shall instead give him the sevenfold noble wealth which I received at the foot of the Bodhi tree, and make him an owner of an excellent inheritance."

When they came to the temple, the Buddha asked one of His pupils named Sariputta to make Rahula a monk.

King Suddhodana was deeply grieved to hear of his beloved grandson becoming a monk. He went to the Buddha and very respectfully told Him not to ordain (making a monk) any one without the permission of the parents. He said. "When you left home it made me very, very sad and painful. When Nanda left home my heart began to ache and I was very sad and unhappy. Then I began to concentrate my love on Rahula. my grandson and loved him more than anyone else. Now you have brought him here and ordained him. I am very sorry and most unhappy about this. Please don't ordain anybody hereafter without the permission of his parents."

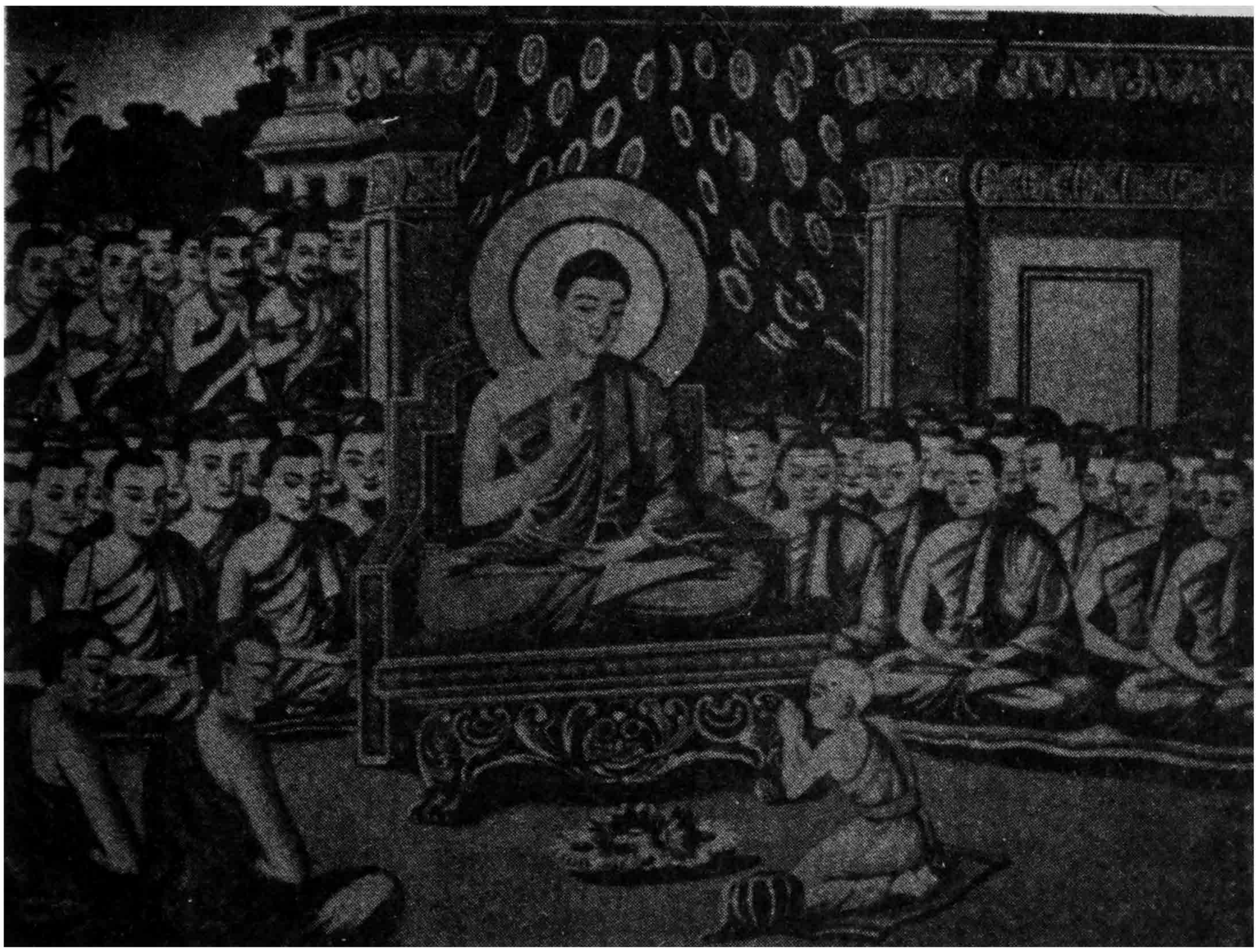
The Buddha agreed and never ordained anybody after that without the parents' permission.



Prince Rahula finds comfort in the company of the Buddha

EXERCISE 24

1. *Who was Rahula?*
2. *Who brought him up?*
3. *How old was he when the Buddha visited Kapilavatthu?*
4. *What did he ask the Buddha?*
5. *Did the Buddha give him what he asked?*
6. *What is 'Ordination'?*
7. *Who ordained Rahula?*
8. *What did King Suddhodana say to the Buddha after Rahula's ordination?*
9. *Why was he very sad?*
10. *Did the Buddha agree to what the father said?*



LESSON 25

THE TWO CHIEF DISCIPLES

Near Rajagaha there were two villages called Upatissa and Kolita. The headmen of these two villages were also known by these two names. Both the families were very close friends.

One day Upatissa's wife, Sari, gave birth to a son. On the same day Kolita's wife, Moggali, also gave birth to a son. Upatissa's son was known either as Upatissa or Sariputta — Sari's son, and Kolita's son was known as Kolita or Moggali Putta — Moggali's son or Moggallana. Both the sons were extremely friendly from their childhood.

When they grew up both of them used to watch dramas. One day while watching a drama called Giragga Samajja — mountain festival—young Kolita and Upatissa decided to leave home in order to seek greater happiness than watching a drama.

Now about this time there was staying near Rajagaha a famous religious teacher called Sanjaya. These two close friends went to him to seek advice. After some time they were not satisfied at all with the teaching of this master and stopped going to him. They wanted to know something more than what their teacher knew and taught. They asked to be taught the way of deathlessness. And they promised each other they would both search and study and meditate with all their power and to try to find the Truth of life, and whichever of them found it first, he would let the other know.

One morning, as Upatissa was in the main street of Rajagaha, he saw at some distance away, an ascetic going round from door to door begging alms of food. And as he looked at him, he was very pleased with everything about him. The unknown ascetic seemed to him to be most modest, so calm and collected in his way of walking along and standing still while the people brought out food from their houses and put it in the bowl. But when he had come nearer, his admiration of the ascetic was turned into wonder and reverence, for there was a look in his face such as he had never seen on the face of any ascetic before -- a look of perfect peace, as of a smooth undisturbed lake

under a calm, clear sky. "Who is this?" said Upatissa to himself. "This ascetic must be one who has found what I am seeking, or else he must be the pupil of such a one. I wonder who is his teacher. Whose teaching can it be that he follows? I must go after him and find out."

When the ascetic had gone round all the houses, and now was going out of the city gate, Upatissa went up to him, and humbly spoke to him thus, "Your coming and going, brother, are so pleasant. Your face is so clear and bright; Who is your teacher, Sir? What is your teacher's name, Sir? What is he teaching Sir?"

"I can soon tell you that, brother," said the ascetic happily. "There is a great ascetic of the Sakya race who has left his home and country behind in order to follow the homeless life. And it is to follow him that I have left my home. He is my teacher. It is His teaching that I follow and practise."

"And what is that teaching, Sir? What is it that your master preaches? I also would like to know it," said Upatissa eagerly, thinking that perhaps at last now he was going to hear from this ascetic about the Truth of life for which he and his friend Kolita had been looking for so long.

"I am only a newcomer into the monk's life of the Buddha," replied the ascetic modestly. It is only very recently since I began to study Buddha's teachings, so I do not know very much yet about His Teachings. I cannot explain it to you in every little point. But if you want I can tell you the summary of it in a few words."

"That is all I want, brother," said Upatissa quickly. "Tell me the summary. The summary is just what I want. What need to make a lot of words about it?"

"Very well, then," said the ascetic "listen!"

The Buddha taught:
"There is a cause for everything,
The Buddha knows it;
He also knows that if there is no cause there is no result,
This is what he teaches."
Assaji was the name of this ascetic whom Upatissa met and spoke to. Assaji was one of the first five monks who listened to the Buddha's first sermon (Lecture).

Venerable Assaji spoke only two lines, but Upatissa was so clever that he understood the other two lines and the meaning of the whole stanza. He realised the Truth that everything that ever has come into existence, or ever will come into existence, must pass away. And he said to the ascetic: "If this is the doctrine you have learned from your teacher, then indeed you have found the state that is free from sorrow, free from death which has not been made known to men for ages and ages." Then he thanked him, paid him due respect and took leave of him. Off he went to find his friend Kolita and to bring him the great news that at last he had found what they wanted.

After a while he met his friend and before he spoke a word Kolita said:

"Why, brother, how clear and shining your face is! Can it be, brother, that at last you have found 'The Truth of life' we both have been seeking so long?"

"It is so, brother; it is so," was Upatissa's glad reply. "I have found the Truth of life."

"But how, brother, how?" Kolita asked eagerly.

When Upatissa explained to him how he got it, Kolita too realised the Truth of life and both of them went to see the Buddha. As they had already known His teaching it was very easy for the Buddha to make them monks. In a short time the Buddha made them His chief disciples. Sariputta's wisdom and Moggalana's miraculous power are well known in Buddhist history.

EXERCISE 25

1. *Who wa Sariputta and who was Moggallana?*
2. *What was the name of the drama they watched?*
3. *Who was their First teacher?*
4. *What was their promise?*
5. *Who did meet the second teacher?*
6. *Did he talk to the second teacher at once?*
7. *What did he ask the second teacher?*
8. *Who was the second teacher's teacher?*
9. *What did the second teacher tell this man?*
10. *What was the Truth of life this man learned from this teacher?*



LESSON 26

THE BUDDHA'S DAILY ROUTINE

The Buddha's daily routine was divided into five parts such as (i) The Forenoon Session, (ii) The Afternoon Session, (iii) The First Watch, (iv) The Middle Watch and (v) The Last Watch.

THE FORENOON SESSION: (4.00 a.m.—12.00 noon)

The Buddha gets up at 4.00 a.m. and as soon as He has had a wash He sits down and meditates for one hour. Then from 5.00 a.m. to 6.00 a.m., He looks round the world with His mental eye to find out where there is anybody whom He could help. At 6.00 a.m. He will put on His robe and go out begging for His food to the nearest village or city He is staying, or if there is some one who needs His help urgently He quickly goes there with some other nionks or else alone.

Then He goes from house to house with his eyes fixed to the ground, receiving in silence, any food that was put into the bowl. If He is with His disciples He goes out begging with them in one single file behind Him. If people invite Him to their houses to take lunch He goes there. After lunch He would preach to the people and monks His Noble Truth. If there is anybody wishing to be ordained He ordains such a person.

THE AFTERNOON: (12.00 noon — 6.00 p.m.)

This is the time when monks usually come to the Buddha to ask questions. If there are any questions He answers them and gives them advice and subjects for meditation. When they have gone away, He retires to His room and looks round the world with His mental eye to see whether there is anybody looking for His help. If He finds anyone He goes there. If there is nobody He comes out of the room to meet hundreds of people waiting in the preaching Hall. He preaches to them in such a way that everybody feels that the Buddha is preaching to each one of them separately, "Giving joy to the wise, promoting the intelligence of the average people and dispelling the darkness of the dull-witted."

THE FIRST WATCH: (6.00 p.m. 10.00 p.m.)

During this time the monks come again to the Buddha to either listen to the preaching or to ask questions to clarify their doubts. Even other people come to see the Buddha at this time of the night.

THE MIDDLE WATCH: (10.00 p.m. — 2.00 a.m.)

During this period the Devas go to see the Buddha and learn His Truth of life. We cannot see them with our eyes.

THE LAST WATCH: (2.00 a.m. — 4.00 a.m.)

From 2.00 a.m. to 3.00 a.m. He walks up and down. From 3.00 a.m. — 4.00 a.m. He sleeps. As soon as He gets up He continues His daily routine in this manner.

Thus we can see the Buddha was busy the whole day. In fact He slept only for one hour per day during His 45 years of teaching as a Buddha. During the early hours of the day He saw the whole universe, blessed it with His boundless love and brought happiness to millions. He became the Buddha at the age of 35, preached another 45 years and relinquished his body at the age of 80.

EXERCISE 26

1. *In the Buddha's Time Table how many parts are there in night?*
2. *When did the Buddha get up and when did he go to sleep?*
3. *What did he do early in the morning?*
4. *How many hours did He sleep in a day?*
5. *What did He do all the time?*
6. *Why were people happy when He preached to them?*
7. *What did he do after His lunch?*
8. *How many years did He preach altogether?*

LESSON 27

POOR SOPAKA

Once there was a boy by the name of Sopaka belonging to a very poor family. When this boy was only seven years old his father passed away and his mother married another man who was very cruel, wicked and unkind. He always beat, scolded and shouted at small Sopaka who was very kind, innocent and good.

The step-father always thought, "This boy is a nuisance. He is good-for-nothing. I hate him but I cannot do anything to him because his mother loves him very much. What shall I do about him?"

One evening he said: "Dear son, let us go for a walk."

The boy was surprised that his step-father spoke to him so kindly and he thought, "My step-father never talked to me so kindly. But now he seems to be very good. Perhaps my mother may have asked him to be kind to me." So he readily went with his step-father.

The step-father took him to a cemetery where there were many smelly dead bodies here and there, tied Sopaka to one of them and left him there while the boy was crying, "Father, please father, don't tie me to this smelly and dirty dead body. Please, father, please. I am frightened, father."

Sopaka began to cry as loudly as he could. But his step-father went away without caring for him. As the night became darker and darker Sopaka's fear increased. There was nobody in the cemetery and the boy was so frightened that his hair stood on end and drops of sweat began to roll down from his body until he was fully wet with sweat. When he heard the noises of jackals, tigers, leopards and other wild animals he began to cry still louder. When he knew that he was all alone and there was nobody in this terrible place to help him, he saw a shining, noble looking and most handsome person with a very

bright light coming towards him and heard Him speak in a most sweet voice: "Sopaka, don't cry. I am here to help you, fear not." And in a moment, Sopaka, broke his bonds and stood before the Buddha in the Jetawana Temple.

Sopaka could not believe his eyes and ears. Although the Buddha was staying very far away from the cemetery, yet He heard Sopaka's cry and, creating a very bright light, sent it towards the boy and made the ropes break by his power. When this poor boy came to the Temple the Buddha bathed him, gave him some food to eat, clothes to wear and consoled him.

When the wicked step-father returned home Sopaka's mother asked him, "Where is my son?"

"I don't know," said the wicked man, "he came home before me and I thought he was sleeping." But the mother could not sleep the whole night. She was crying and crying, thinking of Sopaka.

Next day early in the morning she thought. The Buddha knows all, past, future and present. I must go to the temple and ask the Buddha where my son is. So crying and weeping she went to the temple.

Then the Buddha asked her, "Why sister, are you crying?"

"O Lord," said the lady, "I have only one son. Since last evening he is missing. My husband took him for a walk when he returned home he said that he did not know what had happened to my son."

"Don't worry sister. Your son is safe. Here he is," and so saying, the Buddha showed her Sopaka, now a monk, not as a boy. The mother was very happy to see her son again. After listening to the Buddha's teaching she thanked Him very much and went away as a follower of the Buddha.



The Buddha projects his image before the child Sopaka to protect and to console him in the cemetary at midnight"

EXERCISE 27

1. *What is the name of the poor boy?*

2. *Who love him more, his mother or father?*

3. *Why did his step-father want to kill him?*

4. *What did he do to kill the boy?*

5. *Was the Buddha near the cemetery to hear Sopaka's cry?*

6. *What did the Buddha do to save the boy?*

7. *What happened to him later?*

8. *What did the step-father say to Sopaka's mother?*

9. *Did Sopaka's mother know about her son's suffering?*

10. *What did the Buddha do to Sopaka when He knew that his mother was going to the temple?*

11. *Did Sopaka go home with the mother?*



LESSON 28

LADY — PATACARA

During the Buddha's life time in India there was a multi-millionaire, in the city called Savatthi. He had a most charming daughter who was called Patacara. She had only one brother. Her parents loved her so much that they kept her in the seventh storey of their mansion and did not let her go anywhere.

When she was sixteen years old her parents made arrangements to marry her to a son of another millionaire. But Patacara had already fallen in love with her page boy. A day before the wedding she told her boy-friend, "My parents are going to give me in marriage to a young man of such and such a family and when I am once inside of my husband's house you will never get in. Therefore if you really love me don't delay a moment but find some way or other of getting me out of this place."

"Very well, my love; tomorrow, early in the morning, I will go to the city gate and wait for you at such and such a place. You manage somehow or other to get out of this place and meet me there."

Next day early in the morning, as arranged before, she dressed up like a servant, took a water pot and went as if she was going to fetch water. She met him and ran away with him to a very far away place.

After sometime Patacara wanted to give birth to a child and told her husband, "Here I have no one to help me. But a mother and father always have a soft spot in their heart for their child. Therefore take me home to their house, so that I may give birth to my child in their house and under their care."

"My darling, what do you say?", said he, "If your mother and father were to see me they would torture me to death. It is out of the question for me to go."

She begged him over and over again and each time he refused to go. One day when her husband was away she went to her neighbours and told them, "If my husband ask you where I have gone, tell him that I have gone home to my parents." Then she went away. In the evening when he returned the neighbours told him his wife has gone home.

Quickly he ran after her and overtaking her, begged her to return to his home. But she refused and went on, followed by him, until she reached a certain place. There she had the pains and gave birth to a son. Then she thought, "There is no point of going to my parents' home now," and returned with her husband to his house.

After some time again she wanted to give birth to a child and just as before she left for her parents' home when her husband was not at home.

Her husband went after her and begged her to return to his home but as she refused to return he too followed her as before.

Now as they went on their way a fearful storm arose. The sky was shining with flashes of lightning. There was strong wind and very heavy rain. Then Patacara told her husband: "Dear, the birth-pains have come upon me. I cannot stand it; find me a place out of the rain."

Her husband had an axe with him. He took it and went here and there in the heavy rain looking for sticks and leaves to make a shed for her. Seeing a bush grown on an ant-hill he went there to chop it down. Hardly had he given a few blows to cut a stick when a poisonous snake slipped out of the ant-hill and bit him. Immediately he fell down dead.

Patacara waited and waited for her husband. Her pain became more and more severe and she gave birth to another son. Now the two children, unable to bear up with the rain, wind and cold began to scream and yell at the top of their voices. The mother could not do anything. She put the children in her bosom, stood with her hands and knees; pressed them together and spent the whole night without any sleep.

Early the next morning she took the new born son who looked like a piece of meat; placed him on her hip; gave the older boy one of her fingers to hold and said: "Come, darling; Your father has left us." She went along the path he took and when she came near the ant-hill she saw her husband lying dead, his flesh purple, and his body hard. "All because of me. My husband died on the road" and crying and weeping she went away.

She had to cross a river called Acirawati. It was flooded but not deeper than the waist. When she came near the bank of the river she thought, "Now I am very weak because the whole of last night I had no food, no sleep and lost blood too. I cannot carry both the children at one time." So she kept the older boy on the nearer bank. After carrying the younger one across the river, broke some branches of a tree and spread them on the ground. She kept the child on it and returned to the older child.

She had hardly come to the midstream when a hawk saw the younger child and mistaking him for a piece of meat swooped down from the sky to catch him. The mother seeing the hawk swooping down to take away the child screamed with a loud voice such as "Su! Su!" The older boy thought, "Mother is calling me" and in a hurry fell into the water. While the mother was rushing towards him to save him he was swept away by the river and the younger son was carried off by the hawk.

Now Patacara was very, very sad and cried and cried saying. "One of my sons has been carried off by the hawk; the other has been swept away by the water; by the roadside my husband lies dead."

She went off crying until she met a man and asked him. "Sir, where do you live?"

"In Savatthi" said he.

"In the city of Savatthi in such and such a street lives such and such a family. Do you know them, Sir?"

"Yes, my good lady, I know them. But don't ask me about that family. Ask me about any other family you know."

"O! good sir, I know only that family. Please tell me about that family," said she.

"Since you insist I cannot hide the truth," said the man, "Do you know there was a heavy rain last night?" asked he.

"Yes," answered the lady, "I know. It rained only on me I suppose, because I had the worst of it."

"In that heavy rain," continued the man, "that house was broken. Its walls fell on the father, mother and only son."

"Oh! no! Don't tell me they are dead too!" said the lady.

"Yes, can you see that fire over there?" he asked pointing to some flames of fire at a short distance.

"Yes, I can see it," replied the lady.

"That is their funeral fire," said the man.

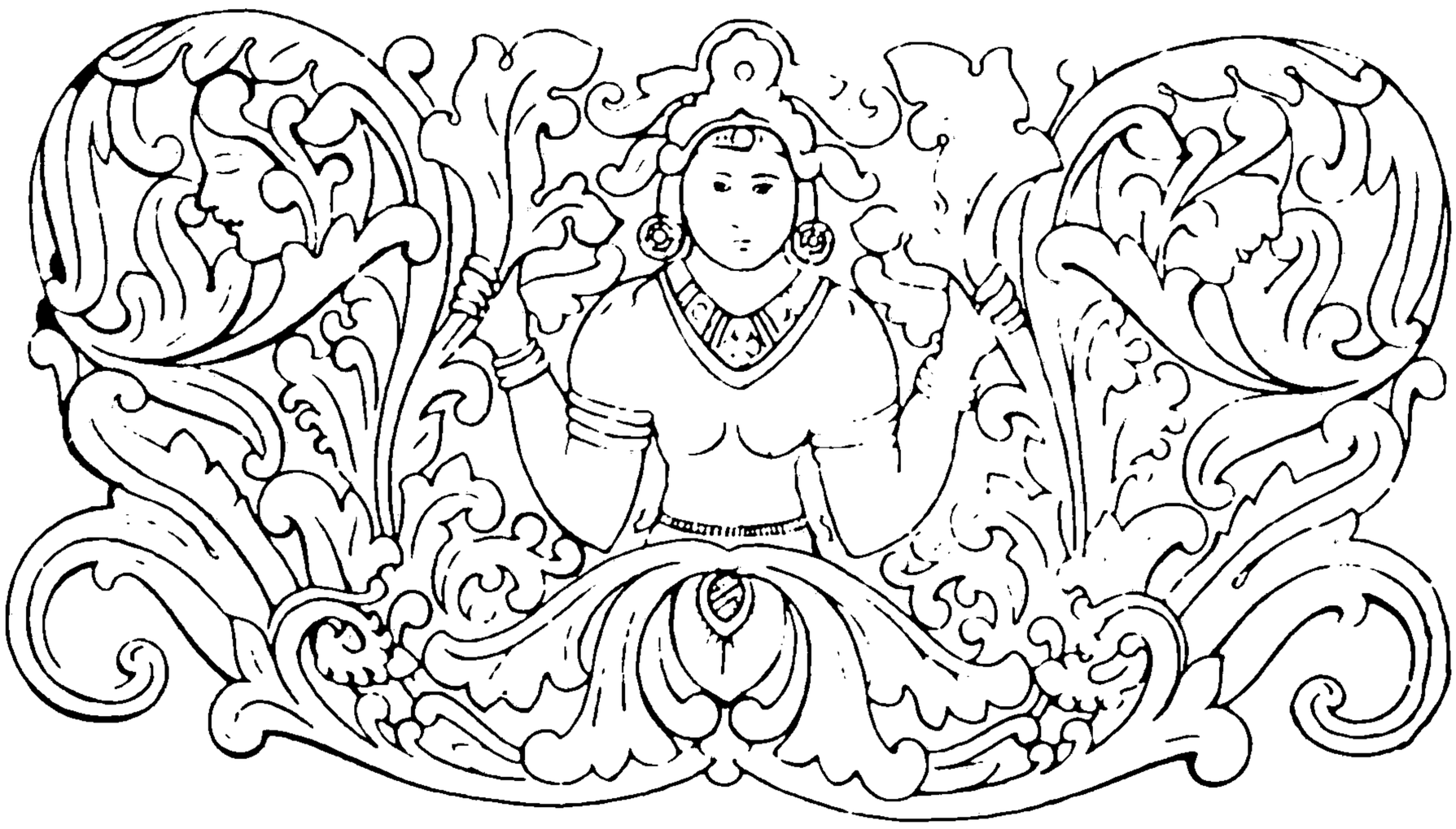


The Buddha consoles Patachara

No sooner had Patacara heard this then she fell on the ground and began to roll here and there with grief. A few people came there and took her to the Temple at Jetawana where the Buddha was preaching. The Buddha asked some ladies to wash her, clothe her, give her food and then he consoled her in the most sweet and wonderful voice. When the Buddha finished His preaching she recovered her senses and begged the Buddha to ordain her. The Buddha did ordain her.

EXERCISE 28

1. *What did Patacara tell her neighbours when she left for her parent's home?*
2. *How did she bring her children across the river?*
3. *Why did she not carry all the children at one time?*
4. *Whom did she marry?*
5. *Why did her husband not like to go to her house again?*
6. *How many children did she have?*
7. *What happened to her husband?*
8. *How many of her relatives lived to see her?*
9. *How did the Buddha help her?*



LESSON 29

ANGULIMALA – THE BANDIT

Angulimala was the son of the adviser to the King of Kosala. His father's name was Bhaggawa and mother's name was Mantani. His real name was Ahinsaka.

When he was born, all the weapons in the country shone very brightly by themselves. The king was very frightened and the next morning he called his adviser to find out the reason why the weapons were shining. The adviser said, "My wife has given birth to a son, your majesty."

"Then why do the weapons shine in this manner?" asked the king.

"Your majesty, my son will be a bandit, a wonderful bandit,"

"Will he rob alone or with a gang?" asked the king.

"He will be single-handed, your majesty," said the father.

"However why don't we kill him now?" asked the king.

"As he will be alone we shall be able to catch him red-handed," said the father.

When Ahinsaka was old enough to go to school his father sent him to a school in Takka Sila. Ahinsaka was the strongest, brightest and yet most obedient child of all the children in the whole school. Other children became envious of him. They began to back-bite to the teacher and made him hate Ahinsaka. And when he had finished his education the teacher told him, "Now as you have finished your studies here you must pay me my tuition fee before you leave this school."

"How much should I pay you, Sir ?" asked Ahinsaka.

"You don't have to pay me in cash. Bring me one thousand right-hand human fingers," said the teacher.

Although it was a most difficult thing for him to do Ahinsaka promised to bring them and got ready to go when his teacher called him back and said, "Remember not to bring two right-hand human fingers from the same person," because he expected that Ahinsaka would bring only one and then he could punish him.

Ahinsaka had never harmed anybody before. He did not know how to cut people's fingers. However, he had to obey the teacher, and taking a sword in his hand off he went until he reached the country called Kosala where King Bhaggawa was ruling.

Hiding near a jungle highway, he waited for passers by, and whenever he met a person he rushed at him, killed him, cut a finger from his right hand and hung it on a tree until vultures and crows had eaten its flesh leaving bones. Then he made a garland of such finger bones and he was therefore known as Angulimala. (Anguli=fingers; mala=garland).

Now he became most cruel, bloody-handed, unkind, and killing daily whoever he met. Then people began to go in groups of three, four, eight, ten, twenty, thirty and so on. But as soon as they heard "I am Angulimala. Don't run!" they all began to shiver, tremble and could not run any farther. Then Angulimala killed them and cut one finger from each of them. Then people gave up that highway.

Angulimala went to another district and began to kill again. Then King Kosala arranged a strong army to go and capture the bandit. His mother, Mantani, heard of the King's preparation and she was very worried. She told her husband: "Dear our son has become a bandit. The king himself is preparing a big army to kill our son. Can you go and stop him?"

"Darling, he is very fierce now. He may have changed completely and if I go there he may even kill me. I do not want to get killed." But the mother was very soft hearted, and kind and loved the son more than she loved herself. She thought, "I must go to the jungle myself to save my son," she took some provisions and set out for the jungle.

Now Angulimala had killed 999 people. He had spent months and months in the jungle without any proper food, sleep, bath, or cleaning his body or clothes. His whole body was stinky. He hated that life and wanted to live a decent life. However he had to kill only one person. He thought, "Today even if my own mother comes, I will kill her and cut off a finger to complete one thousand fingers."

Now the same day early in the morning the Buddha looked round the world to find out whether or not there was anybody whom He could help. He saw that Angulimala had determined to kill his own mother because he was fed up of killing and wanted to become a decent man once again. "I must save him, his mother and other people," thought the Buddha and taking His begging bowl went towards the jungle where Angulimala's mother had gone alone before Him. Overtaking her the Buddha went along the path.

The villagers seeing him said, "Monk, don't go that way. Monk, don't go. There is a murderer in this jungle. His name is Angulimala. He has killed hundreds of people. He is cruel, wicked, unkind and may kill even you. He has no respect for anybody. So many people have already left their homes in this village and even we are leaving our homes today. He may come to this village even today. Please, if you want to live don't go there. Return home immediately." Three times they advised Him in this way and asked Him to return. But the Buddha continued, thanking them for their kind advice.

Now Angulimala's mother entered the jungle. Angulimala saw her coming and thought, "Ah! Poor lady! She comes alone. I pity her but it cannot be helped. I must keep my word. I must kill her." So he took the sword and ran towards her. All of a sudden the Buddha appeared between Angulimala and his mother.

Then Angulimala thought, "It is very good that this ascetic comes before my mother. Why should I kill my mother. I will leave her alone, kill this monk and cut off a finger from him," and with a sword, up he ran towards the Buddha. The Buddha walked slowly before him as usual thinking, "Let this young man see me running," So Angulimala ran and ran and ran

towards the Buddha but he could not catch up with Him. He was gasping for breath and his body was fully wet with sweat. So tired was he that every joint of his legs began to ache. He became so weak that he could not run any farther. Then he thought, "Before I used to catch running elephants, horses, chariots, deers or any other animal that ran very fast and never I felt tired like this. But today how wonderful! How marvelous! I cannot catch this monk!" Then he shouted at the Buddha, "Stop! Stand still, stand still monk!"

"I stand still, Angulimala! Do you also stand still?" said the Buddha.

Angulimala could not understand the meaning of the Buddha's saying and thought: "The Buddhist monks do not tell lies. This monk while running faster than me says he stands still. I also feel unusually weak. There must be some meaning in his saying." Then he asked the Buddha, "How can you say, you stand still while running faster than me?"

"I stand still Angulimala, evermore;

For I am merciful to all living beings.

But you are merciless to living beings,

Therefore I stand still and you stand not still."

Angulimala was very pleased with the Buddha and throwing away his sword knelt before the Buddha. The Buddha blessed him and took him to the Temple. Then He ordained him there. His mother also was very surprised that the Buddha made him a good man within a minute.

The king, before leaving for the jungle to catch Angulimala wanted to get the Buddha's blessing. So he went to the temple with five hundred horses and five hundred soldiers to see Him. Then the Buddha asked him: "What is it that troubles you, mighty king? Is King Bimbisara coming to fight with you or Prince of Licchavi or some other royal trouble?"

"No, reverend Sir, there is a most fierce robber named Angulimala in my kingdom, I am going to catch him," said the king.

"But mighty king, suppose you were to see Angulimala with his head shaven, wearing yellow robes, having left that robber's life, and stopped killing what then should you do to him?"



Angulimala charges after the Buddha in the jungle to cut off the Buddha's finger.

"I will worship him then," said the king.

Then the Buddha called Angulimala. As soon as he came out of the room all the soldiers, except the king, ran away. The Buddha stopped all of them and preached the Dhamma to all of them.

EXERCISE 29

1. How many people Angulimala killed?

2. What is his real name?

3. Why was he called Angulimala?

4. Who made him fierce?

5. Had anybody known before that he would be a murderer?

6. What did the Buddha do to make him good?

7. Who else wanted to save Angulimala?

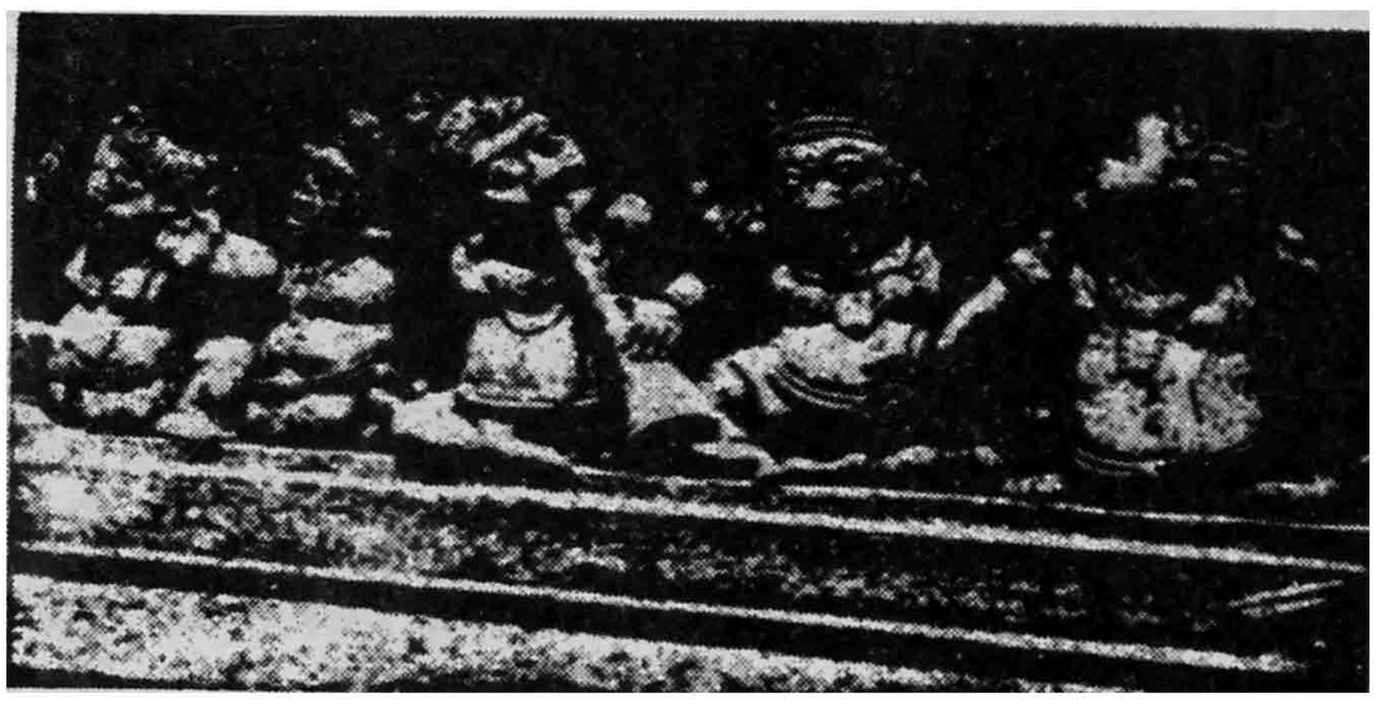
8. Was the king brave enough to go alone to the jungle?

9. How did the Buddha see him?

10. Was the Buddha afraid of him?

11. Why did the Buddha not make him good before he killed 999 people?

12. Why were other students jealous of him?



LESSON 30

WAKKALI – THE MONK WHO ADMIRED THE BEAUTY OF THE BUDDHA

In Savatthi in India there was a young man who loved the Buddha so much that whenever he met Him he kept on admiring the Buddha's appearance, His colour and His handsomeness. One day he thought, "So long as I live in my home I cannot see the Buddha always. I must go to the temple and be ordained. Then I can see Him daily.

So he went to the temple and asked the Buddha to ordain him. Then the Buddha ordained him.

Now he has the chance to admire the Buddha's appearance always. He did nothing but day and night — morning and evening, at breakfast and at lunch and all the time at every place whenever the Buddha went, Wakkali followed Him like his own shadow and kept on admiring Him. The Buddha waited for his knowledge to ripen and said not a word. After a few years the Buddha realised that Wakkali's knowledge was ripened and said to him, "Wakkali, what shall it profit you to look upon my body which is changing always? Whosoever, Wakkali, beholds my teaching, he beholds me."

Wakkali did not go away and instead of reading, learning, meditating or preaching the Dhamma continued to admire the Buddha. Then Buddha thought, "Unless this monk gets a shock he will never come to understand." So one day the Buddha had an invitation from a man to spend three months in Rajagaha. On the day He left for Rajagaha, Wakkali also tried to follow the Buddha. The Buddha said: "Go back, Wakkali, don't follow me. I must go alone."

So Wakkali returned to his room disappointed and began to think, "What a long period is three months! He does not talk to me for three months; neither can I see Him for three long months. What a miserable period I have to spend! What is the use of my living any longer. I throw myself headlong from the top of a mountain." So with this thought, he climbed to the top of a mountain called Mount Vulture Peak.

Now the Buddha, staying in Rajagaha, saw with His mind's eye Wakkali about to jump from the Vulture Peak and thought, "If this monk gets no comfort nor consolation from me he will kill himself." Then immediately He sent forth a radiant image of himself and showed Himself before the monk. As soon as Wakkali saw the Buddha standing before him his sorrow vanished from him. Then the Buddha filled his mind with joy, happiness and peace, saying:

"The monk who has perfect faith in the Religion of the Buddha will be full of joy and satisfaction and reach the place of peace, happiness and end of sorrow."

Wakkali thought, "I have seen the teacher. He is calling me I must go to Rajagaha, with him. But how shall I go? asked himself. Then he heard, "Come Wakkali, fear not, as you look upon me, I will lift you up even as one who lifts up an elephant that has sunk in the mud. I will release you from sorrow and sadness as one who releases the sun from clouds." In a moment Wakkali was really before the Buddha in Rajagaha and while listening to the Buddha, became perfect.

EXERCISE 30

1. *Why did Wakkali want to become a monk?*
2. *Why did the Buddha not tell him to go and meditate at first?*
3. *Why was Wakkali disappointed?*
4. *What did he try to do then?*
5. *How did the Buddha help him?*
6. *What happened to Wakkali later?*

LESSON 31

SUNITA — THE SCAVENGER

In Savatthi in India there was a scavenger named Sunita. As a road-sweeper he received a very small salary which was not enough for him to buy his daily needs. He did not have money enough to buy his clothes or medicine. He slept on the road side, for he did not have a house to sleep in. He saw other people enjoying themselves but he could not mix with them because people called him an outcaste. Whenever a high caste person went on the road Sunita had to leave the road completely for them and stand very far off the road because if his shadow fell on the high caste person he would be scolded and beaten until he bleed very badly. He could not learn anything because he was very poor and had no chance to attend the religious practices. So he lived a most miserable and unhappy poor life.

One day he was sweeping a dirty, dusty and smelly road. His body was covered with dirt and sweat. He was wearing only one small piece of cloth. Suddenly he saw the Buddha coming along that road with thousands of monks behind Him. Sunita was collecting the swept dirt and rubbish, putting them into baskets, keeping them on his head and carrying them away to throw. And when he saw the Buddha and thousands of monks coming towards him, his heart was filled with joy and fear. Finding no place to hide on the road he put his yoke in a bend of the wall and stood as if stuck to the wall joining his palms in respect to the Buddha. The Buddha came near him stopped and spoke to him in a voice divinely sweet saying "My dear friend, do you like to leave this job and to become a monk?

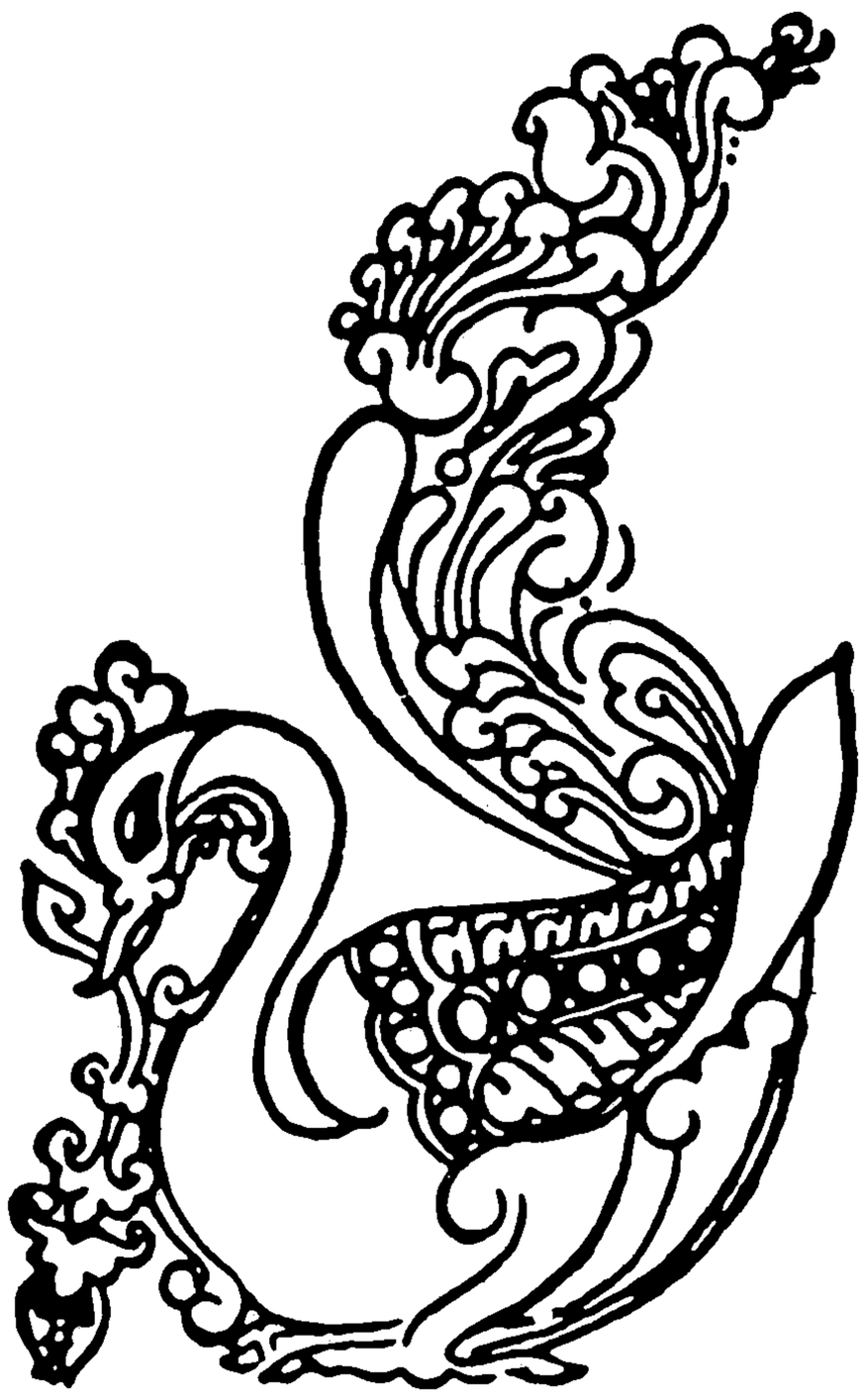
Nobody had ever spoken to Sunita like this before. His heart was filled with such a great joy and happiness that his eyes were filled with tears. He could not talk for a moment. He did not believe his eyes and ears. He never knew that the Buddha was so kind. He always had received orders but never a kind word from anybody. So he said, "O! Most

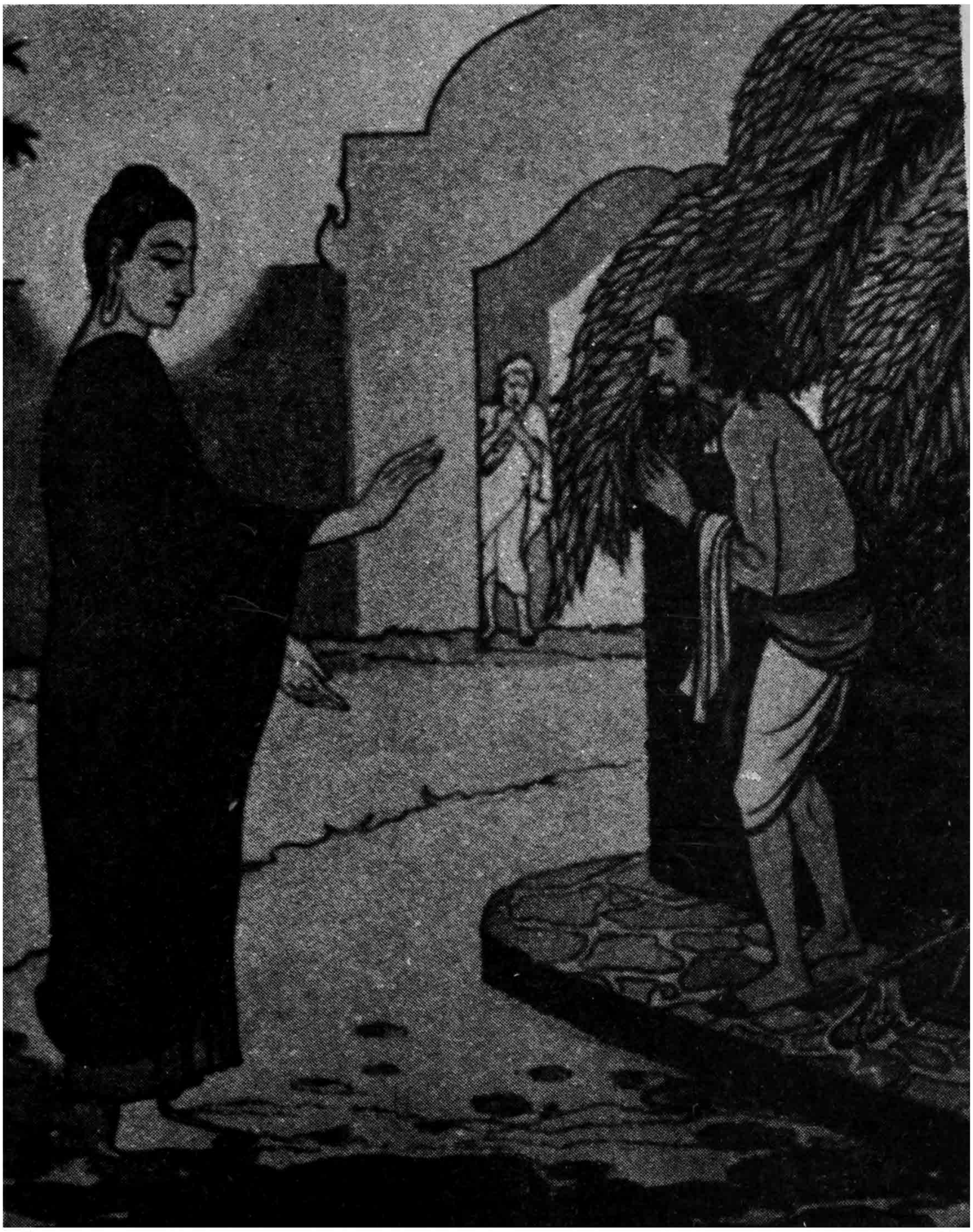
Venerable Sir, I always have received orders, but never a kind word. If you accept a dirty, and most miserable scavenger like me why should I not like to leave this dirty job, Sir?" said Sunita.

Standing on the same spot the Buddha ordained Sunita and took him along with other monks. Afterward no one knew what his caste was and everybody — kings, ministers, commanders in chief or anybody respected him.

EXERCISE 31

1. *Who was Sunita?*
2. *Why did some people refuse him to learn?*
3. *What did they do to him if he learned?*
4. *Why was he so miserable?*
5. *What was he doing when the Buddha went there?*
6. *What did the Buddha say to him?*
7. *What did Sunita think when the Buddha spoke to him?*
8. *Why did he think so?*





Towards human dignity.

LESSON 32

BUDDHA AND THE SICK MONK

On one occasion, while visiting a monastery, the Compassionate One entered a chamber where lay a Bhikkhu in great agony, suffering from a loathsome disease. And although there were many bhikkhus present at the monastery, not one concerned himself about the sick brother. The Buddha beholding his woeful condition, at once began to minister to him. He called Ananda and together they bathed the sufferer and eased his pain. Then they lifted him from his unclean bed and placed him upon a comfortable resting place.

Thereupon He admonished the monks at the monastery for their neglect, He enjoined them hereafter to nurse the sick and suffering. "Whosoever serves the sick and suffering, serves me", He concluded by saying.

EXERCISE 32

1. *Who were the two persons who helped the sick bhikkhu?*
2. *Why did the Buddha admonish the other bhikkhus?*
3. *Why did the Buddha reprimand the other bhikkhus?*
4. *What lesson did the Buddha teach the bhikkhus?*





Ministering to the sick.

LIFE OF THE BUDDHA

PART TWO

(A textbook for the classes of the Secondary schools)

ABOUT THIS EDITION

The Maha Bodhi Society, Bangalore, and Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre at Leh, Ladakh, are engaged in popularising the Teaching of the Buddha. Besides meditation courses, we are administering several projects of social service, of which education is one. We have established schools at Bangalore, Mysore and Ladakh.

In these schools, students, besides the standard scholastic education, are given sound training in moral education and in the basic Buddhist culture. For this 'The Life of the Buddha' in two parts published by the Buddhist Missionary Society , Kuala Lumpur, was found to be ideal for use as a text book, because of the simple and lucid narration of the life of the Buddha. The presentation is not only inspiring but effectively brings out the fundamental teaching of the Buddha.

We are grateful to the Ven. K. Sri Dhammananda, Founder President of the Buddhist Missionary Society, Kuala Lumpur, for very kindly according his permission to reprint 'The Life of the Buddha'. We are, further, deeply obliged to the Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, Taipei, Taiwan, for their generosity in reprinting this book free of cost.

– Bhikkhu Sanghasena
President
Maha Bodhi Society, Bangalore
Mahabodhi International Meditation Centre, Leh-Ladakh.

The Publisher's Note

The Buddhist Missionary Society, in its efforts to bring Buddhism within the reach and understanding of our young Buddhist aspirants, particularly those in the Lower Secondary Schools published "The Life of the Buddha" Part I was sometime in April, 1969. It was indicated that at a later date, efforts would be made to bring out the second or final part of the "The Life of the Buddha."

We find that Part I of our publication, in precise, simple and understandable language with pictorials has been well-received and are popular amongst both the young and old. To comply with the growing demand, we are now upholding our promise and coming out with the final part of "The Life of the Buddha."

This part is more or less on similar pattern as that of Part I — concise, simple and understandable with illustrations thrown in. This publication has been made possible through the advice and guidance given by the Venerable Dr. K. Sri Dhammananda and actively assisted by Dr. Wong Phui Weng, Mr. Teh Thean Choo, Mr. Victor Wee Eng Lye, Mrs Low Poo Lin, Ms. Wendy Choong Yeet Yoon, Miss Sumana Sing and Mr. Susil Premaratna of Sri Lanka for making the illustrations.

We would like to express our thanks and appreciation to our multitude of readers who have given us their support and encouragement in our humble efforts to enhance the cause of Buddhism for the well-being of our country.

BUDDHIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.
12.8.1982.

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The exercises on the lessons are given at the end of this book

LESSON 1

THE BUDDHA'S PAEAN OF JOY

The Buddha had withstood the worst attacks of Mara. Finally, the Evil One retreated and the angry storm which he had raised died away. Now the mind of the Blessed One relaxed into peace. The great darkness faded away and the full moon and stars reappeared again.

The Lord passed into deep meditation, passing beyond the limits of human understanding, seeing the world as it is and not as it appears to be. Like an eagle soaring effortlessly to the sun, His mind moved swiftly onward and upward.

He saw his past lives and all his former births, with their good and evil deeds with their gains and losses. As His mind soared higher and carried swiftly onwards, He saw the round of birth and death of all mankind. He saw beings born repeatedly and die according to their Kamma.

Those who did good deeds were rewarded with heavenly births. Though these rewards lasted longer than the joys of earth, they were impermanent. Those who were suffering in hells would also continue in the round of rebirth. All beings are caught in the world of ignorance and suffering.

As His vision became ever clearer like crystal, he saw the so-called soul of man which man claims as his own, broken up into parts and laid before him like the unwoven threads of a garment. He saw the cause of the chain of existence — Ignorance. For the ignorant man, clinging to things that are worthless, transient creates in himself more and more dangerous illusions. But when desire dies, illusion end, and ignorance vanishing like the night, the sun of Enlightenment would shine.

And having understood the world as it is, the Lord was perfected in wisdom, never to be born again. Craving and evil desire had been completely eradicated, as a fire goes out for lack of fuel.

Bathed in the brilliant light of all Wisdom and Truth sat the Buddha, the Perfect One. And about Him the world lay calm and bright and a soft breeze lifted the leaves of the Bodhi Tree.

Filled with compassion, The Lord sat beneath the Tree, in deep contemplation of the Dhamma. He was lost in bliss, in the perfect peace of Nibbana. At dawn after His Enlightenment, the Buddha uttered this paean of joy:

"Thro' many a birth in Samsara wandered I
Seeking, but not finding, the builder of this house.
Sorrowful is repeated birth.
O house-builder, thou art seen,
Thou shalt build no house again.
All thy rafters are broken, thy ridge pole is shattered.
The mind attains the unconditioned.
Achieved is the end of craving."

LESSON 2

THE BUDDHA'S FIRST SERMON DHAMMACAKKAPPAVATTANA SUTTA

The Buddha's first sermon was called the **Dhammacakkappa-vattana Sutta** which means the establishment of wisdom, or the Turning of the Wheel of Truth. It was preached on the fullmoon day of July, called Asalha.

This sermon was preached to the five ascetics at the **Deer Park** in **Isipatana** (now called Sarnath), near Benares. Many devas and Brahmas were present to listen to the sermon.

The Buddha started the sermon by advising them to give up two extremes. These were the enjoyment of sensual pleasures and the tormenting of the body (self indulgence and self mortification).

He advised against too much sensual pleasures because they were base, worldly, not noble and not helpful for spiritual development. On the other hand, tormenting the body was painful, not noble and also not helpful for spiritual development. He advised them to follow the **Middle Path** called **Majjhima Patipada** which is helpful to see things clearly as they are, to gaining knowledge, higher wisdom, peace, enlightenment and Nibbana.

The Buddha then taught the **Four Noble Truths** in His first sermon. They are the Noble Truths of Sorrow, its Cause, its End and the Way to its end. Everything in this world is full of Sorrow and the cause of Sorrow is craving. The end of Sorrow is Nibbana, and the Way to the end of Sorrow is the **Noble Eightfold Path.**

The Buddha said that He was Enlightened only after He understood these Four Noble Truths. The Noble Eightfold Path has eight parts or factors: Right Understanding, Right Thoughts,

Richt Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration.

1. **Right Understanding** means to know and understand the Four Noble Truths.

2. **Right Thoughts** means to think three kinds of thoughts:

   (i) thoughts of renunciation or thoughts which do not have lustful desires

   (ii) thoughts of goodwill to others which are opposed to illwill

   (iii) thoughts of harmlessness as opposed to cruelty

3. **Right Speech** deals with refraining from falsehood such as telling lies or not telling the truth; slandering or saying bad about other people; harsh words and frivolous talks such as gossiping.

4. **Right Action** deals with refraining from killing, stealing and sexual misconduct.

5. **Right Livelihood** deals with the five kinds of trades which should be avoided in order to lead a noble life. They are trading in arms (weapons), living beings, flesh (breeding animals for slaughter), intoxicating drinks, and poison.

6. **Right Effort** has four parts:

   (i) to try to stop evil thoughts that have arisen
   (ii) to prevent evil thoughts from arising
   (iii) to try to develop unrisen good thoughts
   (iv) to try to continue good thoughts that have arisen.

7. **Right Mindfulness** is also fourfold. It is mindfulness of the body, mindfulness of sensations, mindfulness of thoughts passing through the mind and mindfulness of Dhamma.

8. **Right Concentration** is the one-pointedness of the mind which stays on one object as opposed to the distracted mind which jumps from one thing to another.

The eight factors can be grouped into three smaller groups as follows:

Sila (morality)	Right Speech Right Action Right Livelihood
Samadhi (concentration)	Right Effort Right Mindfulness Right Concentration
Panna (wisdom)	Right Understanding Right Thoughts

Sila, Samadhi and **Panna** are the three stages on the Path to mental purity whose object is Nibbana. These stages are described in a beautiful verse:

To cease from evil,
To do what is good.
To cleanse one's mind:
This is the advice of all the Buddhas.



The First Sermon given by the Buddha to the five ascetics at the deer park, Isipatana, Sarnath.

LESSON 3

KING BIMBISARA

The Buddha's first royal Patron

King Bimbisara had earlier offered half his kingdom to the ascetic Gotama which he turned down because he wanted to search for Enlightenment. King Bimbisara had asked him to return to Rajagaha to enlighten him should the ascetic find what he was looking for.

When Gotama became the Buddha, The Enlightened One, he did not forget his promise to come back. Followed by a large number of his disciples, he decided to revisit Rajagaha. His fame as a religious teacher was spreading in the city and it eventually reached the ears of King Bimbisara.

On hearing that the Buddha had arrived at the city's gateway, the king went out with a large number of his subjects to welcome the Buddha and his disciples. He approached the Buddha and paid his respects, but some of his subjects did not know to whom they should pay respects: the Buddha or Venerable Kassapa. They wondered whether the Buddha was leading a Holy Life under Venerable Kassapa or the reverse as both were highly respected religious teachers.

The Buddha read their thoughts and asked Venerable Kassapa why he had given-up his fire-sacrifice. Understanding the motive behind the question Venerable Kassapa explained that he preferred the peaceful state of Nibbana to useless sensual pleasures. After this he fell at the feet of the Buddha and said, "My teacher, Lord, is the Exalted One: I am the disciple."

The devout people were very glad to hear of the conversion. The Buddha then preached the Dhamma, and King Bimbisara attained the first stage of Sainthood. After realizing the doctrine, King Bimbisara addressed the Buddha, "Formerly, O Reverend Sir, when I was a prince, I had five wishes. They are now fulfilled. My first wish was to become king. My second wish was that a Fully Enlightened One should visit my country. My third wish was that I should associate with such Enlightened One. My fourth wish was that He should preach to me the doctrine. My fifth wish was that I should understand that doctrine. Now all these five wishes are fulfilled."

Out of gratitude for this spiritual gift from the Buddha, King Bimbisara gave a park with a quiet bamboo grove for the use of the Buddha and his disciples. This park was named the **Bamboo Grove.** The Buddha spent three successive rainy seasons there and three other rainy seasons later.

After listening to the Dhamma, the king became a good and pious ruler but due to his past bad Kamma, he had to face an untimely and miserable death caused by his son's wickedness.



King Bimbisara embraced Buddhism after listening to a discourse by the Buddha.

LESSON 4

VISAKHA

The greatest female supporter of the Buddha

Visakha was the devout and generous daughter of a millionaire.

When she was only seven years old, the Buddha visited her birth place. Her grandfather, hearing of the Buddha's visit, advised her to go out and welcome the Buddha. Though she was so young, she was religious and virtuous. As such, immediately after hearing the Dhamma from the Buddha, she attained the first stage of Sainthood.

When she was fifteen years old, some brahmins who saw her, thought she would be an ideal wife for their master **Punnavaddhana**, the son of a millionaire named **Migara.** Visakha possessed the five kinds of feminine beauty — beautiful hair, a beautiful figure, beautiful bone structure, beautiful skin which was smooth and golden in colour, and youthfulness. Accordingly, they made arrangements for Visakha to be married to Punnavaddhana.

On her wedding day, her wise father gave her some advice under ten headings as follows:

1. A wife should not criticise her husband and parents-in-law in front of other people. Neither should their weaknesses nor household quarrels be reported elsewhere.

2. A wife should not listen to the stories or reports of other households.

3. Things should be lent to those who do return them.

4. Things should not be lent to those who do not return them.

5. Poor relatives and friends should be helped even if they do not repay.

6. A wife should sit gracefully. On seeing her parents-in-law or her husband, she should respect them by rising from her seat.

7. Before taking her food, a wife should first see that her parents-in-law and husband are served. She should also make sure that her servants are well cared for.

8. Before going to sleep, a wife should see that all doors are closed, furniture is safe, servants have performed their duties, and that parents-in-law have retired. As a rule a wife should rise early in the morning and unless she is sick, she should not sleep during the day.

9. Parents-in-law and husband should be treated very carefully like fire.

10. Parents-in-law and husband should be given the respect due to Devas.

From the day Visakha arrived in Savathi, the city of her husband, she was kind and generous to everyone in the city and everyone loved her.

One day, her father-in-law was eating some sweet rice porridge from a golden bowl when a Bhikkhu entered the house for alms. Although her father-in-law saw the Bhikkhu, he continued to eat as if he had not seen the Bhikkhu.

Visakha politely told the Bhikkhu, "Pass on, Venerable Sir, my father-in-law is eating stale food."

For a long time Visakha's father-in-law had been unhappy at her because she was a devout follower and supporter of the Buddha while he was not. He was looking for a chance to break off the marriage between his son and Visakha, but her conduct was faultless. Now he had got his chance. Misunderstanding Visakha's words, he thought she had brought disgrace to his family.

He ordered Visakha to be expelled from the house, but she reminded him of her father's request to eight clansmen. Her father told them, "If there be any fault in my daughter, investigate it."

The millionaire agreed to her request and summoned those eight clansmen to come and investigate whether Visakha was guilty of rudeness. When they arrived he told them, "Find her guilty of this fault and expel her from the house."

Visakha proved her innocence by explaining, "Sirs, when my father-in-law ignored the Bhikkhu and continued to eat his milk rice-porridge he was not accruing merit in his present life. He was only enjoying the merits of his past actions. Was this not like eating stale food?"

Her father-in-law had to admit that she was not guilty of being rude.

There were other misunderstandings after this, but Visakha was able to explain to his satisfaction. After this, her father-in-law had realized his error and the great wisdom of Visakha. At her suggestion, he invited the Buddha to their house to give a sermon. On hearing the sermon, he became a Sotapanna.

With wisdom and patience, she succeeded in converting her husband's household to a happy Buddhist home.

Visakha was also very generous and helpful to the monks. She built the **Pubbarama monastery** at a great cost for the use of monks. Great was her joy when the Buddha spent six rainy seasons there.

In one of the discourses that the Buddha delivered to Visakha, he spoke of the eight qualities in a woman that tend to her welfare and happiness in this world and the next:

"Herein, Visakha, a woman does her work well, she manages the servants, she respects her husband, and she guards his wealth. Herein, Visakha, a woman has confidence (Saddha) in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, virtue (Sila), charity (Caga), and wisdom (Panna)."

Being a lady who had many talents, she played an important role in various activities amongst the Buddha and his followers. At times, she was given the authority by the Buddha to settle disputes that arose amongst the Bhikkhunis (nuns). Some Vinaya rules of discipline were also laid down for the Bhikkhunis when she was called in to settle their disputes.

She died at the ripe age of one hundred and twenty.



Visakha, one of the main benefactoress of Buddhism,
offered the Purvarama Monastery to the Buddha,
by the symbolic offering of flowers.

LESSON 5

DEVADATTA

The Buddha's greatest personal enemy

Devadatta was the son of King Suppabuddha and Pamita, an aunt of the Buddha. His sister was Yasodhara. He was thus a cousin and brother-in-law of the Buddha. Together with Ananda and other Sakyan princes, he entered the Order of monks in the early part of the Buddha's ministry. Unable to attain any stage of Sainthood, he worked hard for worldly psychic powers which he got.

In his early days, he was a good monk known for his grace and psychic powers. Later he became conceited with worldly gain and fame. As his ill-will and jealousy towards the Buddha increased, he became the greatest personal enemy of the Buddha.

One day in a large assembly which included kings and princes, Devadatta approached the Buddha and requested Him to make him the leader of the Sangha. Since he was not capable and worthy enough, the Buddha turned down his request. He became very angry as a result and vowed to take revenge on the Buddha.

Although Devadatta was an evil monk, he had many admirers and followers. One of his chief supporters was King Ajatasattu with whom he planned to kill King Bimbisara and the Buddha. Ajatasattu succeeded in killing his father, but Devadatta failed to kill the Buddha.

His first attempt to kill the Buddha was to hire a man to kill the Blessed One. That man would be killed by two other men who would in turn be killed by four other men. Finally, the four men would be killed by eight other men. But when the first man came close to the Buddha, he became frightened. He put aside his weapons and took refuge in the Buddha. Eventually, all the men who were hired to kill one another became the disciples of the Buddha. As a result, the first plot to kill the Buddha failed.

Then Devadatta himself tried to kill the Buddha. When the Buddha was walking on the Vultures' Rock, Devadatta climbed to the peak and hurled a huge rock at the Buddha. On its way down, the rock struck another rock and a splinter flew and wounded the Buddha's foot, causing blood to flow. The Buddha looked up and seeing Devadatta, he remarked with pity, "Foolish man, you have done many unwholesome deeds for harming the Buddha."

Devadatta's third attempt to kill the Blessed One was to make the fierce man-killer elephant, Nalagiri, drunk with liquor. When Nalagiri saw the Buddha coming at a distance, it raised its ears, tail and trunk and charged at the Buddha. As the elephant came close, the Buddha radiated His loving-kindness (Metta) towards the elephant. So vast and deep was the Buddha's love that as Nalagiri reached the Buddha, it stopped, became quiet and stood before the Master. The Buddha then stroked Nalagiri on its trunk and spoke softly to it. Respectfully, the elephant removed the dust at the Master's feet with its trunk, and scattered the dust over its head. Then it retreated, with its head facing the Buddha, as far as the stable, and remained fully tamed. Usually, others tame elephants with whips and weapons, but the Blessed One tamed the elephant with the power of Metta.

Still trying to be the leader of the Sangha, Devadatta tried yet another plan — a deceitful one. With the help of five hundred misled monks, he planned to split the Sangha community.

He requested the Buddha to make it compulsory for monks to follow extra five rules:

(i) dwell all their lives in the forest

(ii) live only on alms obtained by begging

(iii) wear robes made from rags collected from the dust heaps and cemeteries

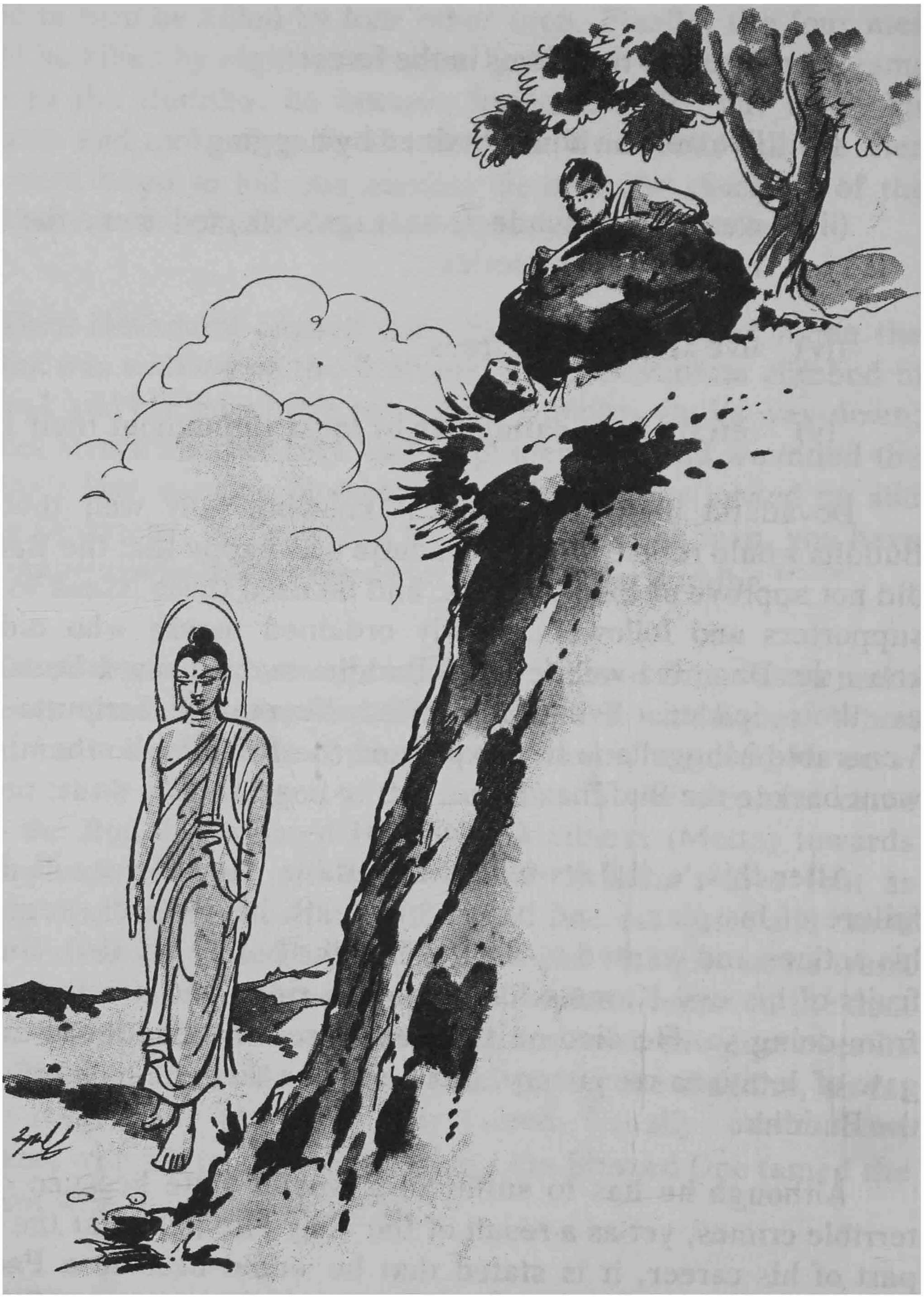
(iv) live at the foot of trees

(v) refrain from eating fish or meat throughout their lives.

Devadatta made this request knowing fully well that the Buddha would refuse them. Devadatta was happy that the Buddha did not approve of the five rules, and he used these issues to gain supporters and followers. Newly ordained monks who did not know the Dhamma well left the Buddha and accepted Devadatta as their leader. Eventually after Venerable Sariputta and Venerable Moggallana had explained the Dhamma to them, they went back to the Buddha.

After this, evil days fell on Devadatta. He fell very ill at the failure of his plans, and before his death he sincerely regretted his actions and wanted to see the Buddha before he died. But the fruits of his evil Kamma had begun to ripen and prevented him from doing so. He died on the way to see the Buddha, near the gate of Jetavana monastery. But before he died, he took refuge in the Buddha.

Although he has to suffer in a woeful state because of his terrible crimes, yet as a result of the Holy Life he led at the early part of his career, it is stated that he would become a **Pacceka Buddha** named **Atthissara** in the distant future. As a Pacceka Buddha he would be able to achieve Enlightenment by his own efforts.



Devadatta, a dissident disciple, making an attempt to take the life of the Buddha by heaving a huge stone.

LESSON 6

KHEMA

The beautiful queen who became the first chief disciple of the Buddha

Just as the Buddha had appointed two chief disciples, Venerable Sariputta and Venerable Mogallana, for the Order of monks, He had appointed two chief female disciples for the Order of nuns. They were Venerable Khema and Venerable Uppalavanna.

Khema was one of the beautiful queens of King Bimbisara. The conversion of Khema was one of the rare cases where the Buddha used his psychic powers to make a change in the heart of another. The Buddha never used his powers to control another person's emotions, but merely to create understanding and make wisdom arise.

Khema was beautiful like a full moon reflected on a still lake at midnight. Her cheeks were smooth as lotus petals and her eyes sparkled like gems. As she had heard that the Buddha did not speak well of physical beauty, she had no wish to see him.

One cool, breezy morning, Khema decided to visit the monastery which King Bimbisara had built for the Buddha in the Bamboo Grove. Squirrels were scampering in the fruit trees which threw long shadows on the grass. The ponds were covered with water lilies and a light scent of jasmine was in the air.

Then Khema was drawn to a deep, clear voice coming from the preaching hall. It was unlike anything she had heard before. It sounded more beautiful than the singing of birds at the break

of dawn. The voice was warm, relaxed and full of love and concern. Its words were words of wisdom.

Like a bee being attracted to a flower, Khema moved to the hall where the Buddha was preaching. As she did not want the Buddha to recognise her, she pulled her scarf down her face and sat at the back of the hall. What she did not know was that the Buddha knew who she was and what she was thinking.

With His psychic powers, the Buddha created an image of a most beautiful young lady about the age of sixteen standing by His side and fanning Him. Khema gasped in wonder at her beauty and rolled her eyes in admiration for her.

"Oh, look at her finely shaped nose, her mouth, her arms and fingers," thought Khema. "With her perfect complexion, she looks like a fully bloomed flower in spring. She is far more beautiful than anyone I have ever seen, and is far, far more beautiful than I."

Just for the moment Khema thought her eyes were playing tricks on her. Did she see this young lady growing older? Oh yes. And the beauty was fading from this lovely creature. Soon wrinkles appeared on her face, and the smile on her lotus-like lips changed into a toothless grin. Her hair turned grey, then white. The limbs that were slender and strong became thin and feeble, and she fell on the floor. From a young lady, this image had changed into an eighty year old woman.

Khema saw this old woman die and rot until her bones turned to dust. She then realized that just like the lovely image, one day she too would grow old and die. All vanity of external beauty fell from her and she instantly understood the impermanance of the physical body and life.

She had attained Arahantship, and she entered into the Order of nuns after getting King Bimbisara's consent. She ranked first in Insight amongst the other nuns.

LESSON 7

ANATHAPINDIKA

The millionaire supporter of the Buddha

The millionaire **Anathapindika** was born as Sudatta. As a result of his great generosity, he was given the name Anathapindika which meant "Feeder of the Helpless".

By buying a park over from Prince Jeta at a huge cost, Anathapindika built the famous **Jetavana Monastery** for the Buddha to spend the rainy season. The price for the park was measured by a layer of gold coins covering the grounds of the park. As the Buddha spent the major part of His life in the quiet surroundings, most of his sermons were delivered there. Altogether the Buddha spent twenty four rainy seasons at Jetavana Monastery.

Several of the Buddha's sermons delivered to Anathapindika were intended for lay people. Two of them were on generosity and the Four Kinds of Bliss. In the discourse on generosity, the Buddha advised that the first stage of the Buddhist life is to practise generosity such as giving alms to monks and building monasteries. More important than being generous is to take refuge in the Triple Gem and to observe the Five Precepts, the five rules which help us to discipline our words and deeds. More important than the observance of the five precepts is the regular practice of meditation on **loving-kindness** (Metta-bhavana), but the most meritorious act is to develop Insight into the fleeting nature of things.

In the discourse on the four kinds of bliss a layman can enjoy, the Buddha mentioned the bliss of ownership, the bliss of wealth, the bliss of being debtless and the bliss of blamelessness.

The bliss of ownership means the satisfaction in gaining wealth by honest means and hard work. The **bliss of wealth** is the satisfaction of enjoying a person's wealth while fulfilling all his duties. The **bliss of being debtless** is the satisfaction that a layman enjoys whenever he knows that he does not incur a debt, great or small to anyone. The **bliss of blamelessness** is the satisfaction derived by a person whose actions of the body, speech and thought do not cause harm to others and free from any blame.

When Anathapindika first met the Buddha at the Sitavana forest near Rajagaha, his confidence was so strong that an aura glowed from his body. On hearing the Dharma for the first time, Anathapindika became a Sotapanna (first stage of sainthood).



Anathapindika, a millionaire respectfully offered the Jetawana monastery to the Buddha.

LESSON 8

THE BUDDHA AND THE FARMER, KASIBHARADVAJA

Once the Buddha was in the village of Ekanala in Magadha. The rain had fallen and it was sowing time. In the early morning when the leaves were still wet with dew, the Buddha went to the field where **Kasibharadvaja,** a Brahmin and farmer, had five hundred ploughs at work. When the Blessed One arrived, it was the time for the Brahmin to distribute food to the workers. The Buddha waited there for his alms food, but when the Brahmin saw him, he sneered and said:

"I plough and sow, and having ploughed and sown, I eat. O ascetic, you also should plough and sow, and having ploughed and sown, you should eat."

"O Brahmin, I too plough and sow. And having ploughed and sown, I eat," replied the Buddha.

The puzzled Brahmin asked, "You claim that you plough and sow, but I do not see you ploughing?"

The Buddha replied:

"I sow faith as the seeds. My discipline is the rain. My wisdom is my yoke and plough. My modesty is the plough-head. The mind is the rope. Mindfulness is the ploughshare and the goad."

"I am restrained in deeds, words and food. I do my weeding with truthfulness. The bliss I get is my freedom from suffering. With perseverance I bear my yoke until I come to Nibbana. Thus

I have done my ploughing. It brings the fruit of immortality. By ploughing like this, one escapes from all suffering."

After this explanation, the Brahmin realized his error, and said, "May the Venerable Gotama eat the milk-rice! The Venerable Gotama is a farmer since his crops bear the fruit of Deathlessness!" So saying, the Brahmin filled a large bowl with milk-rice and offered it to the Buddha.

The Buddha refused the food saying that He could not accept food in return for His preaching.

The Brahmin fell at the feet of the Buddha and asked to be ordained into the Order of monks. And not long after, Kasibharadvaja became an Arahant.



The Buddha begging for food from the farmer Kasibharadvaja, in a paddy field.

LESSON 9

MAGANDIYA

The beautiful maiden who harboured a grudge against the Buddha

Magandiya was such a beautiful girl that many wealthy men wanted to marry her. Her parents always turned down the suitors whom they thought were not good enough for her. Even when her parents found a suitable man for her, she refused to marry anyone less than a king. She was determined to use her beauty to marry well.

One day as the Buddha was surveying the world, He noticed that Magandiya's parents were spiritually developed. All it needed was one statement from Him to open their eyes to Truth. The Buddha went to the place where the Brahmin was making his fire sacrifice outside his village.

When Magandiya's father saw the Buddha coming, he was moved with wonder by His physical beauty, calmness and noble manner. There could not be a better person to give his daughter in marriage, the Brahmin thought. "Don't go away O monk," he said, "wait here until I bring my daughter to see you. You are an ideal partner for her, and she for you."

The Buddha did not speak and remained silent. Instead He stamped His footprint on the ground and went away. Very excitedly the Brahmin carried the news to his wife. "Dress her up quickly, dear. I have seen a man worthy of our daughter." When three of them came back to the spot, the Buddha was nowhere to be seen. They only saw the footprint.

The wife who was familiar with signs read the print, and said, "I don't think this is the print of one who would marry our daughter. It belongs to a person who has given up worldly pleasures."

"You and your signs again. You see crocodiles in a water pot, and robbers in the middle of the house. Look, there he is sitting under the tree. Have you seen, my dear, anyone so marvellous in form! Come along, daughter. This time your suitor is so perfect that you cannot complain."

"Monk, I'm giving my daughter in marriage to you," said the Brahmin to the Buddha. The Buddha turned down the offer, explaining that He had overcome all His worldly pleasures. He related how He had given up household life with all its enjoyments, and how He could not be tempted by even the beautiful daughters of Mara. He said that however beautiful may be the body, it is full of dirt.

Hearing this, the Brahmin and his wife understood immediately that the worldly life is miserable and not something to be attached to, no matter how nice it may appear. Both of them attained **Anagami,** the third stage of sainthood.

Unfortunately, proud Magandiya, who was not spiritually developed, could not understand the real meaning of these words. She thought the Buddha was insulting her beauty. "How could this monk insult me when so many men have fallen for my beauty at first sight. Even if he doesn't want to marry me, he shouldn't declare that my body is full of dirt." Clenching her fists, she whispered under her breath, "You just wait, O monk. When I marry a husband who is powerful, I shall teach you a lesson."

Later, she was married to the King of **Udena.** When she heard that the Buddha had entered the city, her hatred of the

Buddha rose again and she bribed and instigated the people to insult the Buddha so as to drive Him away.

Ananda, who was with the Buddha, did not want to stay on and endure the insults, but the Buddha advised him to practise tolerance and patience. The Buddha said, "As an elephant in the battle-field withstands the arrows shot from a bow, even so will I endure abuse of irreligious people." The Buddha said that the abusive talk would not last long, for such is the power of the Buddha. They stayed on in Udena, and all the abuse ended shortly.

LESSON 10

ALAVAKA, THE DEMON

Conversion of a Cannibal

Alavaka, living near the city of **Alavi,** feasted on human flesh. So fierce, powerful and crafty was he that he was known as the 'Demon'.

One day, the King of Alavi went hunting for deer in the jungle when he was caught by Alavaka. The king begged to be released, but in return for his freedom he had to send one person everyday into the jungle as offering for Alavaka.

Everyday a prisoner would be sent into the forest with a plate of rice. He was told that to gain his freedom he had to go to a certain tree, leave the piate there and he could go free. At first many prisoners volunteered to go on that 'simple' mission. But as the days went by and no one returned to tell the other prisoners what had happened, the prisoners were forced each day to go into the forest.

Soon the prison became empty. How was the king to fulfil his promise of sending a person each day to be eaten by the Demon? His ministers advised him to drop packets of gold in the streets. Those found picking the packets would be caught as thieves and sent to Alavaka. When the word got around, nobody dared to pick the packets. As a last resort, the king started catching children for offering. The terrified subjects fled the city, leaving it deserted. There was only one more boy left — and he was the king's son. With much reluctance, the king ordered that the prince should be sent to Alavaka the following morning.

That day, the Buddha happened to be near the city. When He surveyed the world with His Divine Eye that morning, He saw what was going to happen. Out of compassion for the king, the prince and Alavaka, the Buddha travelled the whole day to the Demon's cave and in the evening He arrived at the entrance of the cave.

The Demon was away in the mountains, and the Buddha asked the gate-keeper if He could spend a night at the cave. When the gate-keeper had gone to inform his master about the request, the Buddha went into the cave, sat on the seat of the Demon and preached the Dhamma to his wives.

When the Demon heard what had happened from his servant, he hurried home, very angry. With his extraordinary power, he created a terrifying thunderstorm which shook and lighted up the forest with thunder, lightning, wind and rain. But the Buddha was unafraid.

Alavaka then attacked the Buddha by throwing his spear and club at Him, but before the weapons could touch Him, they fell at the feet of the Blessed One.

Unable to frighten the Buddha, Alavaka asked: "Is it right that you, a holy man, should enter and sit amongst his wives when the owner of the house is away?" At this, the Buddha got up to leave the cave.

Alavaka thought, "What a fool I am to have wasted my energy trying to frighten this ascetic." So he asked the Buddha to enter the cave again. The Demon ordered the Buddha three times to get out and three times to enter the cave with the hope that he could kill the Buddha with fatigue. Each time the Buddha did as He was ordered. But when the Demon asked the Buddha to leave for the fourth time, the Buddha refused to do so, and said, "I'm not going to obey you, Alavaka. Do whatever you can but I'm going to remain here."

Unable to force the Buddha to do what he wanted, Alavaka changed his tactics and said, "I will ask you some questions. If you can't answer I'll split your heart, kill you and throw you over to the other side of the river."

The Buddha told him calmly, "There is no one, Alavaka, whether man or deva, ascetic, brahma or brahmin who can do such things to me. But if you want to ask anything, you may do so."

Alavaka asked some questions which he learned from his parents who had in turn learned from generation to generation. He had forgotten the answers, but he had preserved the questions by writing them on gold leaves. The questions were:

"What is the greatest wealth for a man? What brings the highest bliss when well mastered? What is the sweetest of all tastes? Which is the best way of life?"

The Buddha answered:

"The greatest wealth for a man is confidence. The true doctrine when well mastered brings the highest bliss. The sweetest taste is truth. Wise living is the decent way of life."

Alavaka asked many more questions all of which the Buddha answered. The final question was:

"Passing from this world to the next, how does one not grieve?"

The Buddha's reply was:

'He who possesses these four virtues — truthfulness, good morals, courage and generosity — grieves not after passing away."

Understanding the meaning of the Buddha's words, Alavaka said, "Now I know what is the secret of my future welfare. It is for my own welfare and good that the Buddha came to Alavi." Alavaka prostrated before the Buddha and begged to be accepted as a disciple.

The next morning when the officers of Alavi came with the king's young son, they were surprised at the sight of the Buddha preaching to Alavaka who was listening attentively to the sermon. When the boy was handed to Alavaka, he was ashamed of himself to receive the boy as an offering. Instead he stroked the boy on his head, kissed him and handed him over to the officers. After that the Buddha blessed the child and Alavaka.

Indeed, the conversion of Alavaka the cannibal showed how the Buddha, with his great wisdom and compassion, could tame a savage and change him into a gentle disciple.



Alavaka, the notorious cannibal making threatening gestures to the Buddha.

LESSON 11

SUJATA AND THE DISCOURSE ON THE SEVEN TYPES OF WIVES

Sujata came from a wealthy family and was married to the son of Anathapindika. She was arrogant, did not respect others and did not listen to the instructions of her husband and his parents. Consequently, discord arose in the family everyday.

One day when the Buddha visited the house of Anathapindika, He heard an unusual uproar in the house and inquired what it was about.

Anathapindika replied, "Lord, it is Sujata, my daughter-in-law. She does not listen to her mother-in-law, her father-in-law nor to her husband. She does not even honour nor pay respect to the Exalted One."

The Buddha called Sujata to His presence and spoke kindly to her, "Sujata, there are seven types of wives a man may have. Which of them are you?"

"What are the seven types of wives, Venerable Sir?" asked Sujata.

"Sujata, there are bad and undesirable wives. There is a wife who is troublesome. She is wicked, bad tempered, pitiless, and not faithful to her husband.

"There is a wife who is like a thief. She wastes the money earned by her husband."

"There is a wife who is like a master. She is lazy, and thinks only about herself. She is cruel and lacking in compassion, always scolding her husband or gossiping."

"Sujata, there are the good and praiseworthy wives. There is a wife who is like a mother. She is kind and compassionate, and treats her husband like her son and is careful with his money."

"There is a wife who is like a sister. She is respectful towards her husband, just as a younger sister to her brother, modest, and is obedient to her husband's wishes.

"There is a wife who is like a friend. She rejoices at the sight of her husband just like a friend who has not seen her friend for a long time. She is of noble birth, virtuous and faithful."

"There is a wife who is like a handmaid. She behaves as an understanding wife when her shortcomings are pointed out. She remains calm and does not show any anger although her husband uses some harsh words. She is obedient to her husband's wishes."

The Blessed One asked, "Sujata, which type of wife are you like, or you would wish to be like?"

Hearing these words of the Blessed One, Sujata was ashamed of her past conduct and said, "From today onwards, let the Exalted One think of me as the one in the last example for I'll be a good and understanding wife." She changed her behaviour and became her husband's helper, and together they worked towards Enlightenment.

LESSON 12

ANANDA

The Buddha's personal attendant

The Buddha had no regular attendant during the first twenty years of His ministry. Several monks used to attend on the Buddha, accompany Him on alms rounds and carry His extra robes and bowl. The monks who served Him were Nagasamala, Nagita, Upavana, Sunakhatta, Cunda, Sagata, Radha and Meghiya.

These monks did not always obey His instructions. For example, one day when the Buddha and Venerable Nagasamala came up to a junction, the Venerable Nagasamala decided to go one way although the Buddha suggested that they should go the other way. The monk went along the road of his choice where he was robbed and beaten by highway robbers. He came back to the Buddha to be reminded of his disobedience and be consoled.

On another day, as the Buddha was on His way to the village of Jantu, Venerable Meghiya who accompanied Him wanted to stop by a mango grove and practise asceticism. Thrice the Buddha advised him against this, but he went his way. Eventually he returned to the Buddha and confessed that he had failed in his practice because almost all the time he was in the grove, three kinds of evil thoughts disturbed his mind: thoughts of sensual desires, ill-will and thoughts of cruelty.

When the Buddha came to the Jetavana Monastery in Savatthi, He said, "Now I am old, Bhikkhus. When I say, 'Let us go this way', some go another way; some drop my bowl and robe on the ground. Choose out one disciple to attend always on me." The Buddha was fifty-five years of age at that time.

The Venerable Sariputta and Moggallana both volunteered their services, but the Buddha did not accept as they had other valuable services to perform to the world. The offers of other disciples were also turned down. As Venerable Ananda was silent, waiting to be nominated by the Buddha Himself, other monks advised him to offer his services.

The Buddha said, "It is not necessary for Ananda to be induced by others. He will serve me on his own accord."

Venerable Ananda agreed to serve the Buddha regularly subject to eight conditions:

1. He should not be given the robes received by the Buddha.

2. He should not be given the food received by the Buddha.

3. He should not sleep in the Fragrant Chamber of the Buddha.

4. He should not be asked to go with the Buddha to accept alms on invitation.

5. The Buddha should consent to invitations received by him.

6. The Buddha should give him permission to introduce visitors that come from afar to see the Buddha.

7. He should be allowed to consult the Buddha whenever he had any doubts to clarify.

8. The Buddha should repeat to him the discourses preached in his absence.

After the Buddha consented to these eight conditions, Venerable Ananda became the regular attendant of the Buddha for twenty-five years.

Venerable Ananda was the son of King Suddhodana's younger brother, and therefore a cousin of the Buddha. He entered the Order of monks during the second year of the Buddha's ministry. Not long after, he attained the first stage of Sainthood **(Sotapatti)** on hearing the sermon given by Venerable Punna Mantaniputta.

From the time he became the Buddha's personal attendant, he served the Buddha with devotion and care up to the Master's last moments. Day and night, he served the Master. At night he would go round the place where the Buddha was resting to prevent His sleep from being disturbed.

At the time of the awarding of ranks on the disciples, the Buddha recognized the Venerable Ananda as first among monks who were learned, mindful, well-behaved and determined. He was greatly responsible for the establishment of the Order of nuns *(Bhikkhuni)* and the planting of the Ananda Bodhi tree which still survives today near the Jetavana Monastery.

Although Venerable Ananda had the rare privilege to listen to every sermon of the Buddha, he did not attain his Arahantship until after the Buddha had passed away.

Venerable Ananda lived to one hundred and twenty years of age before passing away.



Ananda, a disciple and personal attendant, offering food to the Buddha.

LESSON 13

KING AJATASATTU

A young king who was misled by a wicked friend

King Bimbisara had a son, **Prince Ajatasattu,** who was a good friend of Devadatta. By frequent contact with him, Ajatasattu was influenced to kill his father.

One silent and dark night, he crept into the king's room with a knife tied to his thigh, but he was caught by the guards. The kind king thought to himself. "Ah, I have remained king for too long. It is time that I step down and make Ajatasattu the king so that he can rule in peace, and I can retire into a religious life." So instead of punishing Ajatasattu for his evil intentions, King Bimbisara made him the king.

After Ajatasattu was made the new king, he surprised everyone including his father. Swift like a viper caught by its tail, he sprang round and threw his father into the dark and cold dungeon.

"Let him have no visitors other than my mother," ordered Ajatasattu, "and give him no food so that he will starve to death."

But King Bimbisara did not die. His loyal wife secretly brought in food hidden in her clothes. When Ajatasattu found out and stopped this, she carried food in her hair-knot. Again Ajatasattu found out. Finally, the queen had to bathe her body and cover it with a mixture of honey, butter, ghee and sugar. By licking this food off her body, he survived. At last Ajatasattu found this out and he forbade his mother from visiting his father. Now the king had no food to sustain himself and would surely die.

But Ajatasattu lost his patience and demanded, "Call the barber." When the barber came, he ordered, "I command you to go to Bimbisara's cell, cut open the soles of his feet with your razor, tear the skin away and put salt and oil on the raw flesh. Then I command you to force him to walk on burning charcoal until he dies."

When King Bimbisara saw the barber approaching, tears of joy watered his cheeks as he thought, "At last my son has realized his folly. Now he sends a barber to trim my beard and cut my hair before releasing me from prison." Instead, with the help of two soldiers, the barber carried on the orders and the good king died in great pain.

On that very day, Ajatasattu received news that his wife had given birth to a son. Great was his joy at being a father and a thought came to his mind. He hurried to his mother and asked, "Tell me mother, did my father love me as much as I love my son?"

His mother turned around, stared at him in silence with her sorrowful eyes and then murmured in disbelief, "What did you say, Ajataṣattu? You asked if your father loved you?"

"Ajatasattu, when you were in my womb, I wanted to drink blood from your father's hand. When he found this out, happily he cut his wrist for me to drink his blood for you. When the fortune-tellers predicted that you would be your father's enemy, I tried to have a miscarriage but he prevented me. Again I tried to kill you when you were born, he stopped me even though he knew that one day you will kill him. Is that not love?"

"Do you see that scar on your thumb? That was a boil you had when you were small. You were crying from so much pain that nobody could put you to sleep. When your father heard this, he stopped from his royal duty and came running to see you. Gently

he took you in his lap and sucked the boil until it burst open in his mouth. O my son, your father swallowed it out of love for you — that pus and blood. In what way did he not love you, Ajatasattu? Tell me, Ajatasattu, would you do for your son what your father had done for you? And you want him dead.''

When he heard this, Ajatasattu was choked with tears. He ordered his guards, ''Run, run and release my father before he dies.'' But none of them moved. ''Go, I command you. Release my father before he dies,'' Ajatasattu shouted.

Then his adviser stepped forward and said slowly, ''Great king, your father had just died this morning.'' Ajatasattu fell on his knees and cried until his body jerked violently, uttering, ''Forgive me, father. Please forgive me.''

Ajatasattu realized what was the love of a father only when he became a father himself. As for King Bimbisara, he was reborn as a deva in the Catummaharajika Heaven.

LESSON 14

KING PASENADI KOSALA

A royal supporter of the Buddha

(Part 1)

King Pasenadi Kosala was the king of Kosala, which was north of Magadha ruled by King Bimbisara. The capital of the kingdom of Kosala was **Savatthi.** One of his sisters was the chief queen of King Bimbisara, and hence he was the brother-in-law of King Bimbisara.

King Pasenadi Kosala became a follower of the Buddha very early in the Buddha's ministry, and had remained a loyal supporter ever since. His chief queen was **Mallika,** a wise and religious queen who was well versed in the Dhamma and acted as his religious guide on several occasions.

The first time the King met the Buddha, he asked, "How is it that Master Gotama claimed that He has gained Full Enlightenment? Master Gotama is both young in years and young as a monk."

The Buddha replied, "Great king, there are four things that should not be looked down upon and despised because they are young. They are a noble warrior, a serpent, a fire and a Bhikkhu (holy man). An enraged young warrior may ruthlessly cause harm to others. The bite of even a small snake may kill. A little fire may become a huge fire that destroys buildings and forests. Even a young monk may be a saint."

Hearing this King Pasenadi Kosala understood that the Buddha was indeed a wise teacher and decided to become his follower.

King Pasenadi liked going to the Buddha for advice. Even during his official duties, he found time to speak to the Buddha. When talking to the Buddha one day, he received news that his wife, Queen Mallika, had given birth to a daughter. The king was not pleased with the news because he wanted a son.

The Buddha, unlike any other religious teacher, spoke well of women. He said, "Some women are better than men, O king. There are women who are wise, good, who regard their mothers-in-law as goddesses, and who are pure in word, thought and deed. They may one day give birth to brave sons who would rule a country."

Once, the king came to hear that the Buddha had said, "Dear ones whom we love bring sorrow and lamentation, pain, grief and despair." The king asked Queen Mallika whether she agreed with the Buddha. She said that if the Buddha had said so, it must be true. But the king was not satisfied. "How can a loved one bring sorrow?" wondered the king.

Queen Mallika approached a Brahmin to ask the Buddha to explain this. After hearing many stories to explain this, the Brahmin related them to the queen. She then asked the king, "Sire, what is your opinion, is Princess Vajira, your daughter, dear to you?"

"Yes, Mallika, she is very dear to me," said the king.

"If some misfortune were to happen to Princess Vajira, would that bring sorrow and lamentation, pain, grief and despair?"

"Yes," said the king.

"Sire, it was with reference to this that the Blessed One said that dear ones whom we love, bring sorrow and lamentation, pain, grief and despair."

"Mallika," said the king, "it is wonderful, it is marvellous, how far the Blessed One sees with understanding."

When King Kosala lost to his nephew and had to retreat to his capital at Savatthi, the Buddha commented to his disciples that neither the victor nor the defeated would experience peace:

"Victory breeds hatred
The defeated lives in pain
Happily the peaceful live
Giving up victory and defeat."

In a later battle, the two kings fought and King Kosala not only won, but he also captured King Ajatasattu alive with all his elephants, chariots, horses and soldiers. King Kosala thought that he would release his nephew, but not his horses, elephants and others. He wanted the satisfaction of keeping these material possessions as the prizes of victory.

On hearing about this, the Buddha told his disciples that it would have been wiser for King Kosala not to have kept anything for himself. The truth of this statement still applies to this modern war-weary world:

'A man may plunder as he will. When others plunder in return, he who is plundered will plunder in return. The Wheel of Deeds turns round and makes the ones who are plundered plunderers."

King Pasenadi Kosala passed away in his eightieth year when his son **Vidudabha** revolted against him.

LESSON 15

KING PASENADI KOSALA

(PART II)

One evening, when King Kosala was talking to the Buddha, there passed by on the road a band of ascetics with knotted hair, hairy bodies and long nails. They walked past slowly, with heads bent low. At once the king got up and knelt down to worship them, uttering his own name three times.

The king came back to the Buddha and said, "Sir, there were saints among those ascetics. Just see how calmly they walked with heads bent down." With His divine eyes the Buddha saw that those men were not saints but spies who were sent out to gather information.

"Your majesty," said the Buddha, "by mere appearances alone it is not possible for you who lead a life of comfort to know the real nature of another. If we want to understand a person's real nature, his good and bad qualities, we must associate with him for some time. We must be wise and have sharpness of mind."

"We can know a person's purity by conversing with him, observe his courage in the face of misfortune and understand his wisdom during discussions. The bad people, O king, sometimes pretend to be good and it is difficult for you to judge their state of morality."

King Pasenadi Kosala fought many wars with his nephew King Ajatasattu. He was defeated once and at another time he was victorious.

LESSON 16

SUNDARI WHO ATTEMPTED TO DISCREDIT THE BUDDHA

In the 20th year of the Buddha's ministry, two important events took place. The first event was the conversion of the bandit, Angulimala. The other event happened at Savatthi where some jealous ascetics tried to discredit Him.

The Buddha and His disciples were famous and respected religious teachers at Savatthi. Large numbers of the citizens there came regularly to listen to their sermons and to offer them alms.

However, not all the people of Savatthi were followers of the Buddha. There were many ascetics who believed that their teachings were superior. They were very jealous to see more and more people going to the Buddha and His disciples to offer them alms and gifts of robes and medicine. Soon, overcome by jealousy, they decided to do something about it.

In Savatthi there was a female wandering ascetic by the name of Sundari. She was young in age and bad in character. The ascetics planned to attack the character and reputation of the Buddha and the monks through this female ascetic.

"Sister, you must try to help us do something about the Buddha," they told her. "He is attracting the supporters away from us."

"What can I do for you?" Sundari asked.

"You can help us by visiting the Jeta's Grove regularly, and

find out as much as you can about the Buddha. With this information we may try to win the people back to support us.''

So Sundari visited the Jeta's Grove regularly to spy on the Buddha. She did not know the real purpose — an evil one — why the ascetics had asked her to go there. When the ascetics knew that many people had seen Sundari going regularly to the Jeta's Grove, they killed her and buried her in a hole dug in a ditch nearby. They then went to King Pasenadi Kosala and reported that after Sundari had gone to listen to the Buddha preaching, she was missing.

''Where do you suspect she is?'' asked the King.

''She may still be in the Jeta's Grove, great king,'' they replied. ''We are worried because she has never been known to remain very long after the Buddha has finished giving his sermon.''

The king said, ''Then you must go immediately to search for her there.''

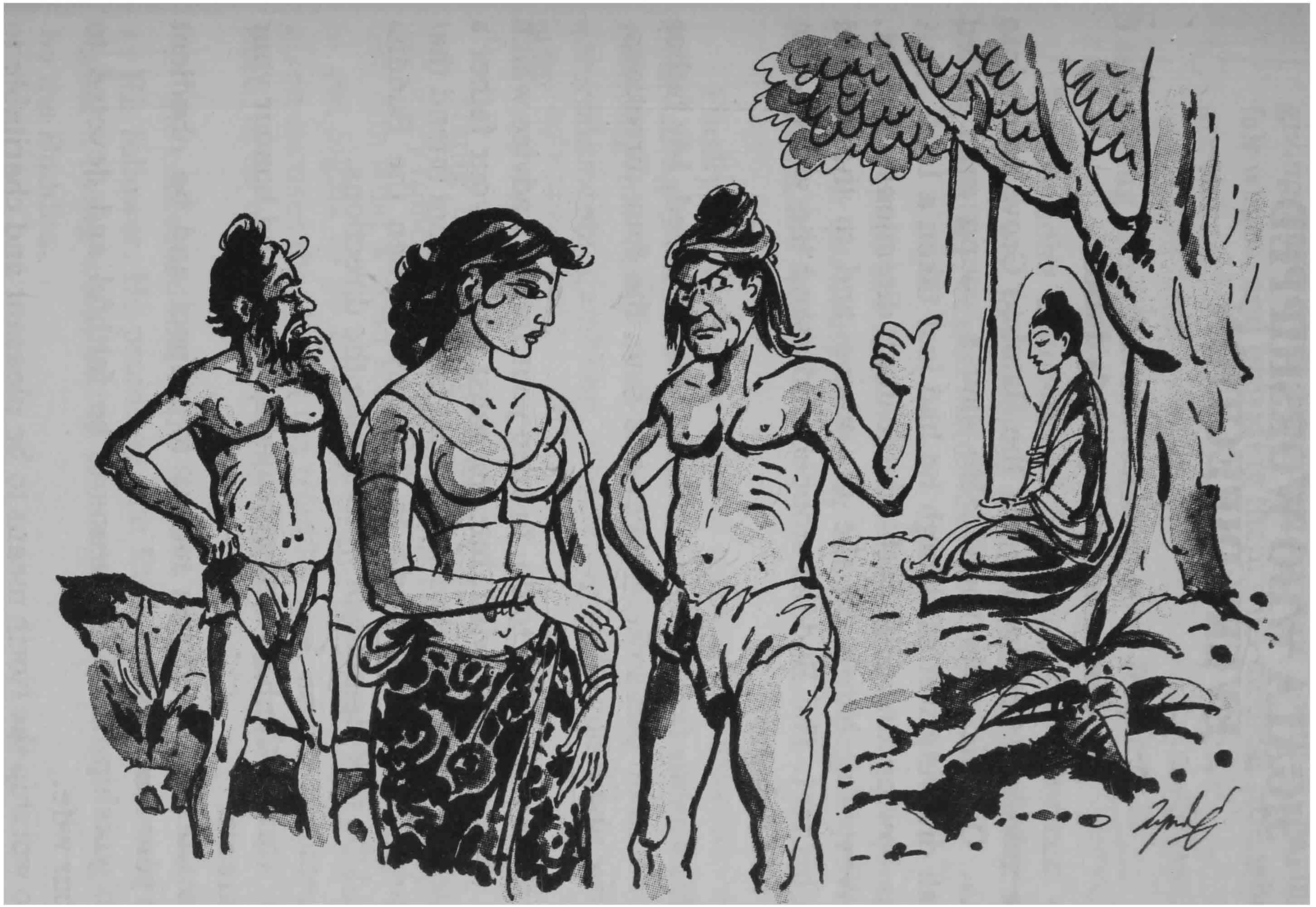
The ascetics pretended to search for Sundari in the Jeta's Grove. After searching for some time, they went to the spot where they had buried her and dug up her body. Placing the corpse on a stretcher, they carried it back to Savatthi. All the way they shouted angrily at the top of their voices, ''See, Lords, see the work of these monks who call themselves holy people. They are shameless and wicked liars. See what they have done. They have committed sexual misconduct with poor Sundari and then they have killed her to hide their crimes.''

The Buddha's disciples became frightened by these accusations and did not know what to do, but the Buddha calmly told them to control their fears. There was nothing to be frightened about, since they were innocent of the crime.

The Buddha advised them, "The people will accuse you and scold you, but you will do nothing except to recite: Those who lie and those who deny what they have done are equal in their evil deeds and will suffer. Just be patient. The people will see how calm you are and they will get tired of scolding you. Within seven days, the shouting and accusations will subside."

The people soon started to ask each other why the Buddha and his disciples were so calm. Then they remembered that the Buddha and His disciples were virtuous and they had never been known to commit any evil crime. Someone else had murdered Sundari. It was impossible that such compassionate religious teachers could have done it. In the end, the shouting stopped and the Buddha used this incident to give some advice to His disciples on how to endure abuse with patience: "When harsh words are spoken to a bhikkhu, let him endure with an unruffled mind."

After some time, the king discovered that the crime was committed by those ascetics. When they were brought before the king, they confessed their crimes in public and they were punished accordingly. After the incident the Buddha and His disciples became more honoured and respected in Savatthi.



Sundari, a young lady, being instigated by some ascetics to discredit the Buddha.

LESSON 17

SIGALA WHO WORSHIPPED EVERY DIRECTION

The discourse on a layman's duties

One morning, the Buddha left the Bamboo Grove to go into Rajagaha. On His alms round, He saw a young man called Sigala, all dripping wet as though he had just taken a bath. This man was bowing down in each of the four directions — East, South, West and North, to the sky above and to the ground beneath his feet. The Buddha stopped and asked the young man what he was doing.

"This was my father's last wish just before he died. My father advised me to do this to keep away evil from the four directions, from above and below."

"It is the right thing to do, to keep your father's advice which he gave you as his last wish, but you must not take your father's words literally," said the Buddha. "Your father did not intend that you should actually bow down in this way." Then the Buddha explained the real meaning of worshipping the directions:

"To worship the East really means to respect and honour your parents.
To worship the South means to respect and be obedient to your teachers.
To worship the West means to be faithful and devoted to your wife.
To worship the North means to be pleasant and charitable to your friends, relatives and neighbours.
To worship the sky means to look after the material needs of

the religious persons such as the monks and ascetics.

To worship the earth means to be fair to your servants, giving them work according to their abilities, paying them fair wages, and providing them with medical care when they are sick.

It is by doing these that one can keep away from evil.''

The Buddha also advised Sigala another fourteen evils to avoid. There are four evils of conduct which should be avoided: Killing, stealing, sexual misconduct and telling lies.

Then there are four evil motives which make people perform evil actions: partiality or being biased and prejudiced, enmity, foolishness and fear.

Finally, avoid the six ways of wasting one's wealth: drinking intoxicating drinks, roaming about the streets until late at night, spending too much time at fairs and thinking too much about entertainments, gambling, associating with evil friends, and being lazy.

Young Sigala listened with respect to this advice and he suddenly remembered that when his father was alive, he had often told him what a good teacher the Buddha was. Although he tried to get Sigala to go and listen to the Buddha, Sigala had always given excuses that it was too troublesome, he had no time, he was tired, or he had no money to spend on the monks.

He confessed this to the Buddha and asked Him to accept him as His follower. He promised that from now on, he would keep his father's dying wish, but in the correct way as was taught to him by the Buddha.



The Buddha giving an explanation of the symbolic directional worshipping performed by Sigala.

LESSON 18

AMBAPALI

The immoral woman who later became an Arahant

Persons of all castes, high and low, women as well as men, sought the teachings of the Buddha — and He gladly received them. To Him, there was no caste in blood and tears. When the Buddha and His disciples stopped at Vesali, a lady named Ambapali offered Him the use of her Garden of Mangoes outside the city so that He might rest in the cool shade of her trees.

Ambapali was as lovely as the golden sun rising from the ocean, but was immoral in character. She did not intend to see him, but her servant said to her, "Lady, all the nobles and people went on foot to the Garden of Mangoes yesterday. When I asked them why they had gone there, they said that it was because of the man who is resting there. There was none like him. And he was the son of a king and had given up his kingdom that he might find the Truth."

Always ready for some new sight, she leapt to her feet, got on one of her coaches and rode towards the garden, casting proud glances about her. When she arrived at the gate, she descended from the coach and walked through the palm trees and mango trees. It was very quiet, and even the leaves did not stir. Beneath the deep shade of trees, the Buddha was seated with folded hands and feet and behind His head an aura glowed like the midnight moon.

Ambapali stood there amazed, forgetting her beauty, forgetting herself, forgetting all but only the Blessed One. And her heart melted and flowed away in a river of tears. Very slowly, she approached the Buddha and fell before His feet and laid her face on the earth.

The Buddha asked her to rise and be seated, and spoke the Dhamma to her. She listened to these great words with ears that drank them as the dry earth longs for the rain. After she had received the Dhamma, she bowed at His feet and invited the Buddha and His disciples to a meal the following day. The Buddha accepted her invitation.

Now the nobles of Vesali had also come out to meet the Blessed One. On the way they met Ambapali who told them that the Buddha had accepted her invitation for a meal the following day.

They said to her, "Sell us the honour of His company for great weights of gold."

And she, glowing with joy, said, "Sirs, even if you were to give me Vesali and all its territories yet I would not give up this honourable meal."

In anger, the nobles went to the Buddha and requested the honour of offering the meal, but the Buddha informed them that He had earlier accepted Ambapali's invitation.

The following day, Ambapali set sweet milk-rice and cakes before the Buddha and His followers, and she herself attended upon them in great humility. After the Buddha had eaten, Ambapali sat on one side, with folded palms and said, "Holy One, I present this garden to the Order. Accept it, if it be your will."

The Buddha accepted the gift, seeing the purity of heart that made it. He then gladdened her with the Dhamma. This was the turning point of Ambapali's life: she understood the Dhamma and became a virtuous woman. Some time later she entered the Order of Nuns and with the heart of Wisdom strengthened in her, she

became an Arahant. Just as the lotus does not grow on dry land but springs from black and watery mud, Ambapali, despite her immoral past, managed to achieve the height of spiritual development.

After this incident, the Buddha and His disciples moved to a little village nearby called Beluva. As the rainy season was about to begin, the Buddha decided to spend the last rainy season at this village.



Ambapali, the courtesan receiving advice from the Buddha to reform her way of life.

LESSON 19

JIVAKA

The Buddha's doctor

Jivaka was the celebrated doctor during the Buddha's time in India. Immediately after his birth, Jivaka was placed in a wooden box and thrown away by his mother, a courtesan, on a rubbish heap beside the road.

That morning, **Prince Abhaya,** a son of King Bimbisara happened to pass that way as he was going to the palace. When the prince discovered that the baby was alive, he was moved by compassion and ordered it to be brought up as his adopted son.

When he grew up, Jivaka studied medicine for seven years under a famous teacher. Soon his unusual skill as a physician and a surgeon became known. He was called upon to treat kings and princes, including King Bimbisara himself. But of all the distinguished people Jivaka attended to, his greatest pleasure was to attend to the Buddha which he did three times a day. When the Buddha's foot was wounded by a splinter from a rock thrown by Devadatta, it was Jivaka who healed Him.

Realizing the advantages of having a monastery close to his house, Jivaka built one in his mango garden. He invited the Buddha and His disciples to the monastery, offered alms and donated the monastery to the Buddha and the monks. After the blessing ceremony of this monastery, he attained the first stage of Sainthood **(Sotapanna).**

Later, when King Ajatasattu asked him where he could go for religious discussions, Jivaka brought him to see the Buddha. Although the king had killed his father under the evil advice of Devadatta, King Ajatasattu became a distinguished lay follower of the Buddha and took a leading role in the First Buddhist Council.

LESSON 20

THE QUARREL AT KOSAMBI

Better to live alone if we cannot find good friends

In the 9th year of His ministry, the Buddha was residing at Kosambi. While He was there, a quarrel arose between two parties of Bhikkhus. One party consisted of experts in Disciplinary or Vinaya rules, the other group consisted of experts in the Dhamma.

The Buddha tried various ways to settle the quarrel peacefully, but finally when His efforts had failed, He left them without a word, taking with Him only His bowl and robes, and retired to the Parileyyaka Forest.

During His stay in the forest, an elephant, ministered to the needs of the Buddha. The elephant cleared a portion of the forest in the midst of which stood a stone cave. Daily the elephant brought fruits as offerings to the Buddha. One day a monkey who had watched the elephant making his offerings, brought a honeycomb as an offering too.

Meanwhile, the people of Kosambi found out that the Buddha had gone alone to the Parileyyaka Forest because of the quarrelling amongst the monks. They stopped offering alms to the monks. News of this reached Ananda at Savatthi. At the end of the rainy season Ananda decided to visit the Buddha and told him that the people everywhere were eager to hear the Dhamma from Him, especially the people at Savatthi. In this way the Buddha was persuaded to return to Savatthi and some time after this, the quarrelling monks came to seek the Buddha's forgiveness. It was because of the quarrel at Kosambi that the Buddha gave a sermon in which he said: "One should associate with the wise, not the foolish. It would be better to live alone if we cannot find good friends. There is no companionship with the foolish."

LESSON 21

UPALI

The Buddha's attitude towards other religious teachers

Upali*, a millionaire, was one of the best pupils of another religious teacher, **Nigantha Nathaputta,** whose teaching differed from that of the Buddha. Being very good at debating, Upali was requested by his religious teacher to approach the Buddha and defeat Him on certain points on the Law of Cause and Effect (Kamma). After a long discussion, the Buddha was able to convince Upali that his religious teacher's views were wrong.

Upali was so impressed with the Buddha's teaching that he immediately asked to become His follower. He was surprised when the Buddha advised him, "Upali, you are a famous person. Be sure that you are not changing your religion just because you are pleased with me or that you are under the influence of your emotions. Thoroughly investigate my teaching with an open mind before you decide to become my follower."

At the Buddha's spirit of free enquiry, Upali was even more pleased and he said, "Lord, it is wonderful that you have asked me to think over carefully. If it were other teachers, they would have accepted me without hesitation, taken me round the streets in a procession and proclaimed that such and such a millionaire had renounced his former religion and embraced theirs. Yes, indeed, Lord please accept me as your follower."

The Buddha agreed to accept Upali as His lay follower but further advised him, "Although you have now become my follower, Upali, you should practise tolerance and compassion. Continue to give alms to your former religious teachers as they

still depend very much on your support. You cannot just ignore them and withdraw the support you used to give them.''

The Buddha's advice of tolerance, free inquiry and not accepting His teachings for emotional reasons has given a clean record in the spread of Buddhism. There have never been any Buddhist religious fanatics who forced people to accept the religion by torture or the fear of punishment. Buddhism was able to spread through peaceful means mainly because of its beauty and goodwill.

**This is not the Venerable Upali, a barber before he became a monk, who answered questions on the Vinaya rules at the First Buddhist Council.*

LESSON 22

SONA

The monk who tried too hard

A son of a rich businessman, Sona liked to listen to lute music and to play the instrument. As he was brought up in the lap of luxury, his skin was very delicate and soft. It was said that hair grew out of the skin of his soles. Once he was brought before King Bimbisara who wanted to see the unusual feet he had heard so much about.

Sona lived near the Vulture's Peak Rock in Rajagaha where the Buddha stayed during some rainy seasons. One day, Sona went to the Vulture's Peak Rock to listen to the Buddha's sermons about the happiness experienced from non-attachment of worldly desires. As he wanted to experience this happiness, Sona asked to be ordained as a monk.

After becoming a monk, he was taught to be constantly mindful, even when walking. Sona was very enthusiastic. Everyday he walked to and fro in the monastery until one day his feet developed blisters and bled.

Even after trying so hard, yet he did not experience happiness, only pain and disappointment. Thoughts of craving for worldly things still came to his mind. "It is no use," Sona said to himself, "I have tried so very hard, but have still not achieved what I wished for. It is better for me to return to lay life and enjoy the happiness I used to experience by performing charity."

When the Buddha heard about this he went to see Sona. "Sona," He said, "I have heard that you are not getting good results from your practice of mindfulness and want to return to the lay life. Suppose I explain why you did not get good results, would you stay on as a monk and try again?"

"Yes, I would, Lord." replied Sona.

"Sona, you were a musician and you used to play the lute. Tell me, Sona, did you produce good music when the lute strings were well tuned, neither too tight nor too loose?"

"I was able to produce good music, Lord." replied Sona.

"What happened when the strings were too tightly wound up?"

"I could not produce any music, Lord." said Sona.

"What happened when the strings were too slack?"

"I could not produce any music at all, Lord." replied Sona.

"Sona, do you now see why you did not experience the happiness of renouncing worldly craving? You have been straining too hard in your meditation. Do it in a relaxed way, but without being slack. Try it again and you will experience the good results."

Sona understood and stayed on in the monastery as a monk, and soon he attained sainthood.

LESSON 23

MAHA PAJAPATI GOTAMI

The establishment of the Order of Bhikkhunis (Nuns)

In the 5th year of His ministry, the Buddha was staying at Vesali when he heard that his father, **King Suddhodana,** was ill. He decided to visit him again at Kapilavatthu to preach to him the Dhamma. After hearing the Dhamma, the King immediately attained Arahantship and passed away peacefully seven days later. It was in this year that the Order of Nuns was founded at the request of Maha Pajapati Gotami, the aunt and foster mother of the Buddha.

Three times she approached the Buddha and asked Him to ordain her into the Sangha, but each time the Buddha refused, without giving any reason. After the Buddha had stayed at Kapilavatthu as long as He liked, He journeyed back to Vesali.

Pajapati Gotami was quite a determined lady, and was not so easily discouraged. She got her hair cut and put on yellow garments and surrounded by a large number of Sakyan ladies, she walked the distance of about 150 miles from Kapilavatthu to Vesali. When she arrived at Vesali, her feet were swollen and her body was covered with dust. She stood outside the Hall where the Buddha was staying, with tears on her face, still hoping that the Buddha would ordain her as a nun.

Ananda was surprised to see her in this condition. "Gotami, why are you standing here like this?" he asked.

"Venerable Ananda, it is because the Blessed One does not give permission for women to become nuns," she replied.

"Wait here, Gotami, I'll ask the Blessed One about this," Ananda told her. When Ananda asked the Buddha to admit Maha Pajapati Gotami as a nun, the Buddha refused. Ananda asked three times and three times the Buddha refused.

So Ananda put the request in a different way. Respectfully, he questioned the Buddha, "Lord, are women capable of realizing the various stages of Sainthood as nuns?"

"They are, Ananda," said the Buddha.

"If that is so, Lord, then it would be good if women could be ordained as nuns," said Ananda, encouraged by the Buddha's reply.

"If, Ananda, Maha Pajapati Gotami would accept the Eight Conditions* it would be regarded that she has been ordained already as a nun."

When Ananda mentioned the conditions to Maha Pajapati Gotami, she gladly agreed to abide by those conditions and automatically became a nun. Before long, she attained Arahantship. The other Sakyan ladies who were ordained together with her also attained Arahantship.

The establishment of an Order of Nuns with rules and regulations was something which the Buddha did for the first time in the world. No other religious leader had given such a high religious position for women in his religion.

**These rules are related to certain Vinaya Disciplines.*



Maha Pajapathi Gotami, step-mother of the Buddha,
requesting permission for the ordination of women as Nuns.

LESSON 24

THE BUDDHA CONDEMNED THE CASTE SYSTEM

At the time of the Buddha, the caste system was firmly established in India. According to the caste system, a person's position in society was determined from the time he was born. There were four castes or classes of people in society:

- the brahmins or priests, who claimed to be the highest caste and the purest of peoples

- the warriors

- the merchants and traders

- the untouchables considered the lowest class of workers and servants who did all the menial jobs, and were treated as slaves.

The Buddha condemned the caste system which he considered unjust. He pointed out that there existed wicked and cruel people as well as virtuous and kind people in every caste. Any person who had committed a crime would be punished accordingly by his kamma no matter what caste he belonged to. A person may be considered to have come from a high or low caste according to his good and bad deeds. Therefore, according to the Buddha it is the good and bad actions of a person and not his birth which should determine a person's caste.

The Buddha introduced the idea of placing a higher value on morality and the equality of man instead of into which family or caste a person is born into. It was also the first attempt to abolish discrimination and slavery in the history of mankind.

The Buddha declared:

"By birth is not one an outcaste,
By birth is not one a brahmin;
By deeds is one an outcaste,
By deeds is one a brahmin."

LESSON 25

THE MIRROR OF THE DHAMMA

From Rajagaha the Buddha, accompanied by Venerable Ananda and a large number of His disciples, started the journey to the north. They would stop a while at every city and village, and the Buddha would preach the Dhamma.

They stopped at a place called the Brick Hall in a little village called **Nadika.** It happened that some monks and lay devotees had passed away at this village, and Venerable Ananda wanted to know the future states of those who had passed away.

The Buddha revealed that as they had been practising what He had taught, all of them had attained one of the stages of Saint-hood. He continued, "Now, it is natural for human beings to die; but if you ask this question each time a person dies, it wearies me. So, I will give you a sermon called 'The Mirror of Truth or The Mirror of the Dhamma'. With this, a noble disciple can predict for himself, 'There is no more hell for me, no more animal birth, no more ghost world, no more Peta realm, no more sorrowful, evil and low states. I am a Sotapanna and I am not subject to fall back to the lower states. I shall be assured of final Enlightenment."

"What, O Ananda, is the Mirror of Truth? Herein a noble disciple has absolute confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. Because of his confidence, he spends much time to reflect or think about the great qualities of the Triple Gem. These reflections will help him develop the great qualities within himself and the power to concentrate the mind. These results will help him attain the first stage of Sainthood (Sotapanna).

"Possessing this Mirror of Truth, a noble disciple shall be able to predict for himself that he shall not fall back to lower states like hell, the animal world, the ghost world and other sorrowful and unhappy states."

After delivering this sermon at Nadika, the Buddha and His disciples then proceeded to Vesali.

LESSON 26

THE BUDDHA'S ATTITUDE TO MIRACLES

When the Buddha was once living at Nalanda in the **Pavarika Grove,** a man by the name of **Kevaddha** went up to the Buddha, paid homage to Him and said, "Lord, Nalanda is a successful city. The people living in Nalanda are prosperous, and they have confidence in the Blessed One. Lord, it would be good if the Blessed One appointed a Bhikkhu to work a marvel of supernormal power, so that the people of Nalanda might become much more confident in the Blessed One."

The Buddha replied, "Kevaddha, I do not teach the Law to Bhikkhus in that way." The Buddha gave the same reply when the question was put to Him the second and third time. After the third question, the Buddha replied that there were three kinds of super-normal marvels:

1. The marvel of supernormal power to appear as many persons, to pass through walls, to fly through the air, walk on water. All these are physical actions the ordinary people cannot perform.

2. The supernormal power to read other people's minds.

3. The supernormal power to be able to guide people according to their mental development, for their own good, using suitable methods to fit these people.

The first two supernormal powers if displayed for their own sake in order to impress people, are no different from the performance of magicians. A Bhikkhu who practises such worldly miracles is a source of shame, humilation and disgust. Such

actions may impress and win converts and followers, but they do not bring Enlightenment to help them put an end to suffering.

The third kind of supernormal power though which may be called a 'miracle' helps people to get rid of suffering. This is the only supernormal power that is fit to be practised.

The only miracles that should be performed are these: when you see a man full of passion, craving and greed and you teach him to free from passion, craving and greed; when you see a man is a slave to hatred and anger, you use your powers to help him control his hatred and anger; when you come across a man who is ignorant and who cannot see the true nature of the world (everything in this world is impermanent, sorrowful and egoless) and you use your powers to help him overcome his ignorance. These are worthy 'miracles' you can perform.

This advice to Kevaddha was also extended to the Vinaya rules which forbid monks from performing miracles to impress people and gain converts, without helping them to be enlightened. This was clear in the case of Pindola.

Arahant Pindola Bharadwaja was famous for miraculous psychic powers. A rich man wanting this monk to prove his psychic powers placed a beautiful bowl at the top of a high place and challenged any holy man to get the bowl down. If he could do it, he could keep the bowl.

Pindola Bharadwaja flew up and took the bowl down easily. This was also done to prove to the rich man that there are saints in the world, a fact which the rich man did not believe. When the Buddha came to know about this incident, He called Pindola Bharadwaja to bring his bowl. He broke the bowl into pieces in front of a large gathering of Bhikkhus, saying, "I am displeased about the demonstration of your psychic powers. You must never show off your powers just to impress simple ignorant people."

LESSON 27

THE BUDDHA'S ILLNESS AND ANNOUNCEMENT

The Buddha had not been staying very long at **Beluva** during the rainy season when He became sick. The severe sickness attacked Him with violent and deadly pains. But mindful and self-possessed He bore them without complaint. And this thought came into His mind: "It would not be right for me to pass away without addressing the disciples, without taking leave of the Order. Let me now by a strong effort of the will supress this sickness." He supressed the sickness and it abated.

And when He began to recover, He went out of the monastery, and sat down behind it on a seat spread out for Him. The Venerable Ananda went where the Buddha was, and sat respectfully beside Him, and said, "I have seen how the Blessed One suffered, and at that sight my body became weak as a creeper. Yet I had some little comfort in thinking that the Blessed One would not pass away until He had left some instructions for the Order."

"What then, Ananda? Does the Order expect that of me?" said the Buddha. "Now, a perfect One does not think that it is He who shall lead the Order or that it is dependent upon him. I too, Ananda, am now grown old and full of years. My journey is drawing to its close. Therefore, Ananda, each of you should make himself his island, himself and no other his refuge. Each of you should make the Law his island, the Law and no other his refuge. And whoever after I am dead shall be an island onto themselves, who make the Law their island, the Law as their refuge, they will be the foremost among my bhikkhus."

Though old and feeble, the Buddha continued to use every opportunity to speak the Dhamma to His disciples. He also went

on alms rounds when there were no private invitations from the villagers at Beluva.

One morning the Buddha robed himself early in the morning and taking His bowl went into Vesali for alms. When He returned from his alms round, He spoke to the Venerable Ananda: "Take a mat, Ananda, let us go to the Capala Shrine to pass the day."

They sat down on a mat and the Buddha spoke about the pleasant surroundings in all the shrines in Vesali, and then addressed Venerable Ananda thus:

"When anyone has practiced and developed the Four Means of Accomplishment, he could, if he wished, live for a longer period. I have completely mastered the Four Means of Accomplishment, and if I so wish, I could live longer."

Even though the Buddha was giving such a clear suggestion, Venerable Ananda could not understand its meaning to ask the Buddha to live longer for the good, benefit, and happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world. At that time Venerable Ananda could not understand because his mind was confused.

The Buddha addressed him, "You may leave me, Ananda, for a while." So Ananda went and sat under a nearby tree.

The Buddha had appeared on earth to teach the seekers of Truth how to see things as they truly are and to show the path for deliverance from all the ills of life. The Buddha reflected about the long years of teaching He had performed to fulfil His purpose. He felt that He had given all the necessary instructions to His followers, both monks and the lay followers. Not only were they following His teaching, they were also able to teach the teachings to others. He therefore decided not to live up to His full life span and announced to Venerable Ananda that He would pass away in three months' time.

Only then Venerable Ananda remembered what the Buddha had said earlier and begged Him to live for a longer period for the

good and happiness of all.

"Enough, Ananda, do not beg me. The time for making such a request is now past. Let us now go to the Hall with the Pointed Roof in the Great Wood, Ananda," said the Buddha.

When they arrived at the Great Hall, He said, "Ananda, go and summon all the monks living in Vesali. Ask them to meet at the service hall." When the monks had all come, He spoke to them, "Whatever truths I have taught you, study them and put them into practice, so that the Holy life may last long for the good and benefit of the many.

"All component things must grow old and pass away. Work out your salvation with diligence. At the end of three months from this time, the Blessed One will pass away. My age is now full ripe: my life draws to its close. I leave you, I depart, relying on myself alone. Be diligent, mindful and virtuous. Keep watch over your own hearts. Who lives out diligently this Law and Discipline will leave the round of rebirths and make an end of suffering."

All the Buddha's disciples were grieved to hear the sad announcement of His death in such a short time to come. All of them came forward to pay their last respects except one monk named **Dhammarama.** They did not know why he did not come and suspected him of not being loyal and dutiful to the Buddha.

This matter was reported to the Buddha who summoned Dhammarama to His presence to explain his absence to all the other monks. He then replied that since the Buddha would be passing away in three months' time, he thought that the best way of honouring the Teacher was by attaining Arahantship before His death.

"Excellent, excellent! He who loves me should follow the example of Dhammarama. He honours me most who practises my teaching best," said the Buddha in praise of this monk.

The Buddha decided to continue His last journey the next morning. His next destination was the little village of **Pava.**



The Buddha giving His last words to His disciples.

LESSON 28

THE LAST DAYS OF THE BUDDHA

Many incidents in the life of the Buddha occuring after His 55th year were recorded without an exact indication of the year in which they happened. However, the incidents occuring in His eightieth year were placed in that year because they were recorded in the **Maha Parinibbana Sutta.**

When the Buddha reached His eightieth year, He felt that His days in this world were coming to an end. Although He had suffered the sicknesses and effects of old age like any other man, He was different from an extraordinary man. With His mental powers developed through advanced mental training, He was able to overcome certain painful feelings of the body. His mind was always sparkling like a radiant diamond, even though His body was beginning to weaken.

In this last year of His life, He decided to spend His last days in the peaceful and simple surroundings of **Kusinara,** a small village in northern India. He preferred to leave behind Him the large and prosperous cities such as Rajagaha and Savatthi and their crowds, their merchants and kings.

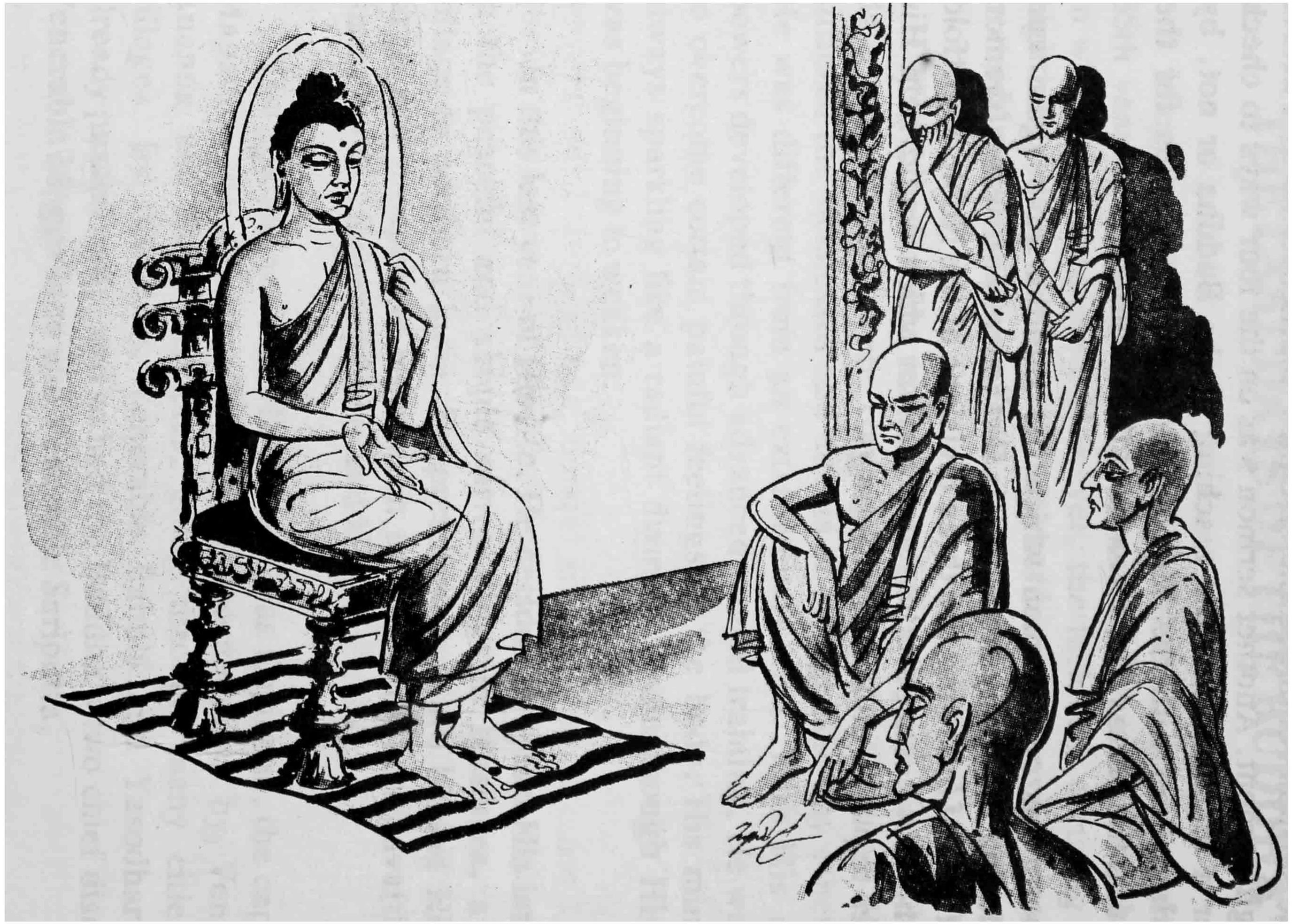
The starting point of His journey was Rajagaha, the capital of Magadha. He journeyed on foot, accompanied by Venerable Ananda and many disciples, going through many cities and villages. By this time, Venerable Rahula and Yasodhara had already passed away, and so had the Buddha's two chief disciples, Venerable Moggallana and Venerable Sariputta.

During the travels, the Buddha's thoughts turned to the welfare of the Order of monks. Many of His sermons were concerned with advising on how the monks should behave to

ensure that the Order would carry on after His death. He reminded His disciples to practise all the truths that He had taught them.

One sermon reminded the disciples to practise the 37 Factors of Enlightenment. Another sermon was on the four ways to check whether a teaching was the teaching of the Buddha or not, by comparing them with the Vinaya (the disciplinary rules for the Order) and the Suttas (the sermons of the Buddha).

There was one sermon which the Buddha gave again and again during the many stops in His last journey. It was a sermon on the fruits of following the three divisions of the Noble Eightfold Path: morality, concentration and wisdom which would help His disciples to put an end to all sufferings.



The Buddha making an announcement to His disciples,
of His impending passing away.

LESSON 29

THE BUDDHA'S LAST MEAL

On their arrival at **Pava,** the Buddha and His disciples were invited by the son of the village goldsmith, whose name was Cunda, to a meal called **Sukaramaddava** or boar's delight. Some scholars believe it was a special delicious dish of mushrooms with that name, while others believe it to be a dish of wild boar's flesh.

The Buddha advised Cunda to serve Him only with the Sukaramaddava that he had prepared. The other food that Cunda had prepared could be served to the other monks. Then the Buddha told him, "Cunda, if any Sukaramaddava is left over, bury it in a hole. I do not see anyone in the world other than the Blessed One who could digest the food if he ate it."

"Even so, Lord" Cunda replied, and he buried the left-over in the ground. He went to the Buddha, and after paying homage to him, he sat down at one side. Then the Buddha taught him the Dhamma. The Buddha also praised Cunda for the meal which had refreshed and strengthened Him after His journey. But soon after this, the Buddha suffered from an attack of dysentery which he had earlier and sharp pains came upon Him. By an effort of will He was able to bear the pain. Though extremely weak the Buddha decided to continue on immediately to Kusinara, a little more than six miles away. After a painful struggle, He reached a grove of Sala trees just outside the town.

The Buddha took His last bath in the river Kakuttha. Resting a while, He spoke thus, "Now it may happen that some people may make Cunda to regret for having given me the meal that had made me sick. Ananda, if this should happen, you should tell Cunda that you have heard directly from the Buddha that it was

a gain for him. Tell him that two offerings to the Buddha are of equal gain: the offering of food just before His supreme Enlightenment and the offering of food just before He passes away. This is the final birth of the Buddha."

Then He said, "Ananda, please make a couch ready for me with its head to the North between two big Sala trees. I am tired and I want to lie down."

Now, on that occasion, those two Sala trees were covered with blossoms through the influence of the Devas; though it was not the season. They scattered and sprinkled the Buddha with the falling blossoms, as though out of respect for Him. Then the Buddha said to Venerable Ananda, "Ananda, the two big Sala trees are scattering flowers on me as though they are paying their respects to me. But this is not how I should be respected and honoured. Rather, it is the monk or the nun, or the man or woman lay follower, who lives according to my Teaching that respects and honours me."

There are four places for faithful followers to see which would be their inspiration. These are the four holy places made sacred by their association with the Buddha. They are:

1. The Buddha's birth place

2. The place where the Buddha attained Enlightenment

3. The place where the Buddha gave His first sermon and set in motion the incomparable wheel of Truth

4. The place where the Buddha attained Maha Parinibbana."

A little while later it was noticed that Venerable Ananda was no where to be seen. He had gone into the hut, stood leaning

against the door bar and was weeping. He thought: "Alas! I remain still but a learner, one who has yet to work out his own perfection. And the Master is about to pass away from me — He who is so kind!"

And, the Buddha sending for Ananda, said to him, "Enough now, Ananda! Do not sorrow and cry. Have I not already repeatedly told you that there is separation and parting from all that is dear and beloved? How is it possible that anything that has been born, had had a beginning should not again die? Such a thing is not possible.

"Ananda, you have served me with your acts of loving-kindness, helpfully, gladly, sincerely, and so too in your words and your thoughts. You have gained merit, Ananda. Keep on trying and you will soon be free of all your human weaknesses. In a very short time you too will become an Arahant.

"Now you can go, Ananda. But go into Kusinara and tell all the people that tonight, in the last watch of the night, the Buddha will pass away into Nibbana. Come and see the Buddha before He passes away."

So Venerable Ananda, taking with him another monk, did as the Buddha bid him and went to Kusinara to tell the people. When they heard the news, they were much grieved. And all the people of Kusinara, men, women and children came to the two big Sala trees to bid a last farewell to the Buddha. Family by family, they bowed low down before Him and so bade Him farewell.

LESSON 30

SUBHADDA

The last convert of the Buddha

Now it happened that a certain wandering ascetic called **Subhadda** was staying near Kusinara at that time and when he heard that the Buddha was about to pass away, he resolved to go and see Him about a certain matter before He passed away. He was sure that the Buddha could answer his question and clear up his doubts.

So Subhadda went to the Sala tree grove, and asked Venerable Ananda whether he could see the Buddha. But Venerable Ananda said, "Enough, friend Subhadda, the Buddha is very weary. Do not trouble Him."

For the second and third time, Subhadda made this request and for the second and third time, Venerable Ananda replied in the same manner.

However, the Buddha caught a word or two of the conversation between Venerable Ananda and Subhadda, and He called Venerable Ananda to Him and said, "Come, Ananda. Do not keep Subhadda from seeing me. Let him come and see me. Whatever Subhadda may ask of me, he will ask from a desire for knowledge and not to annoy me. And whatever I may say in answer to his questions, that he will quickly understand."

Permission granted, Subhadda approached the Buddha, and after greeting Him, said, "O, Gotama, there are many famous religious teachers who teach other teachings which are different from yours. Have they all, as they claim, discovered the Truth? Or have some of them discovered the Truth and others have not?"

"Enough, O Subhadda," said the Buddha, "you should not worry about their teachings. Listen to me and pay close attention to what I say, and I will make known to you the Truth."

"In whatever doctrine or Teaching in which the Noble Eightfold Path is not found, there also are not to be found those who have become Sotapanna, Sakadagami, Anagami or Arahant. But in those Teachings where the Noble Eightfold Path is found, there also is found the Sotapanna, the Sakadagami, the Anagami and the Arahant. And in this Teaching of mine, O Subhadda, is to be found the Noble Eightfold Path, and in it alone the Sotapanna, the Sakadagami, the Anagami, and the Arahant are found. In no other schools of religious teachers are such Aryan (saints) to be found. And if only my disciples live rightly and follow my precepts or training rules, the world will never be without genuine Arahants."

Then Subhadda asked to be admitted to the Order of monks, and the Buddha granted His request. In this way Subhadda became the very last convert and disciple of the Buddha, just as Kondanna in the deer park at Benares was the first convert and disciple forty-five years earlier.

And by earnest and diligent effort in following the Teaching, Subhadda very shortly became an Arahant.

LESSON 31

THE BUDDHA'S FINAL WORDS OF ADVICE

After the conversion of Subhadda, the Buddha spoke again to Venerable Ananda thus: "It may be, Ananda, that some of you will say, without the Buddha, the Sublime Teacher, there is no Teacher for us. No, Ananda, you should not think in this way. Whatever Doctrine and Discipline taught and made known by me will be your Teacher when I am gone."

Then the Buddha, addressing the other monks said, "If any amongst you has any doubts as to the Buddha, the Teaching or the Order of monks, ask me now so that afterwards, you may have cause to regret that you did not ask me while I am still with you."

But at these words, none of the monks said anything. None had any questions, and all of them were silent. For the second and third time the Buddha addressed the monks in this way. And for the second and third time, all the monks were silent.

Then the Buddha said, "Perhaps it may be out of respect for the Teacher, that you do not question me. Let a friend, O disciples, tell it to another friend." Still the disciples remained silent.

Then Venerable Ananda spoke to the Buddha, "It is wonderful. It is marvellous, Lord! I do believe that in all this great company of monks there is not a single one who has doubts or questions about the Buddha, the Teaching or the Order of Monks, or the Path and the method of training and conduct."

"With you, Ananda," said the Buddha, "this may be a matter of faith and belief. But, Ananda, I know that not one single monk gathered here has any doubt or question about these things.

Of all the 500 monks here, Ananda, he who is the most backward is a Sotapanna, not subject to fall back to a lower state of existence, but is certain and destined for Enlightenment."

Then the Buddha addressed all the monks once more, and these were the very last words He spoke:

"Behold, O monks, this is my last advice to you. All component things in this world are changeable. They are not lasting. Work hard to gain your own salvation."

Then the Buddha lapsed into Jhana stages one after the other, ever deeper and deeper. Then He came out of the Jhana again. Then He passed into Jhana a little way; and from this Jhana He passed into Nibbana leaving nothing whatever behind that can cause rebirth again in this or any other world.

The passing away of the Buddha occurred in 543 B.C. on a Vesak fullmoon day.

LESSON 32

THE FIRST BUDDHIST COUNCIL

The meeting to Preserve the Teaching of the Buddha

The Buddha's death was a great loss. All His followers, with the exception of Anagamis and Arahants, were plunged in deep grief and were weeping and crying. But an immoral monk who had entered the Order in his old age, was the only one that rejoiced at the Buddha's death.

"Do not be sad brothers," he said. "Cry not. We are now free of that Great Ascetic. He constantly worried us, saying 'This is suitable, this is not suitable.' Now we are free to do what we like."

These unexpected words spoken by a monk hardly a week after the death of the Teacher made the Venerable Maha Kassapa, the third chief disciple of the Buddha, to call for a meeting of the leading Arahants in order to protect and preserve the Teaching. The other elder monks were consulted and they all welcomed the suggestion.

King Ajatasattu was informed of the intention of the Order of monks and he made all the necessary arrangements for the monks to meet at the entrance of the **Sattapanni Cave** in Rajagaha.

Five hundred seats were arranged and prepared in the large hall, but only 499 famous Arahants were chosen for the meeting. The empty seat was reserved for the Venerable Ananda, who was then still a Sotapanna.

Soon there was only one more day before the meeting was to begin. The Venerable Ananda thought, "The meeting is tomorrow. It is not right for me to go to the meeting as a mere learner and not an Arahant. I must try very hard to purify my mind in the little time left for me."

He spent much of the night in the "Contemplation of the body", one of the meditation exercises taught for the purification of the mind by the Buddha. When it was almost dawn, he thought, "I shall lie down" but he kept mindful of the body. Before his head touched the pillow and after he had raised his feet off the ground, all the remaining defilements disappeared from his mind. He had attained Arahantship, and he went to the meeting as an Arahant.

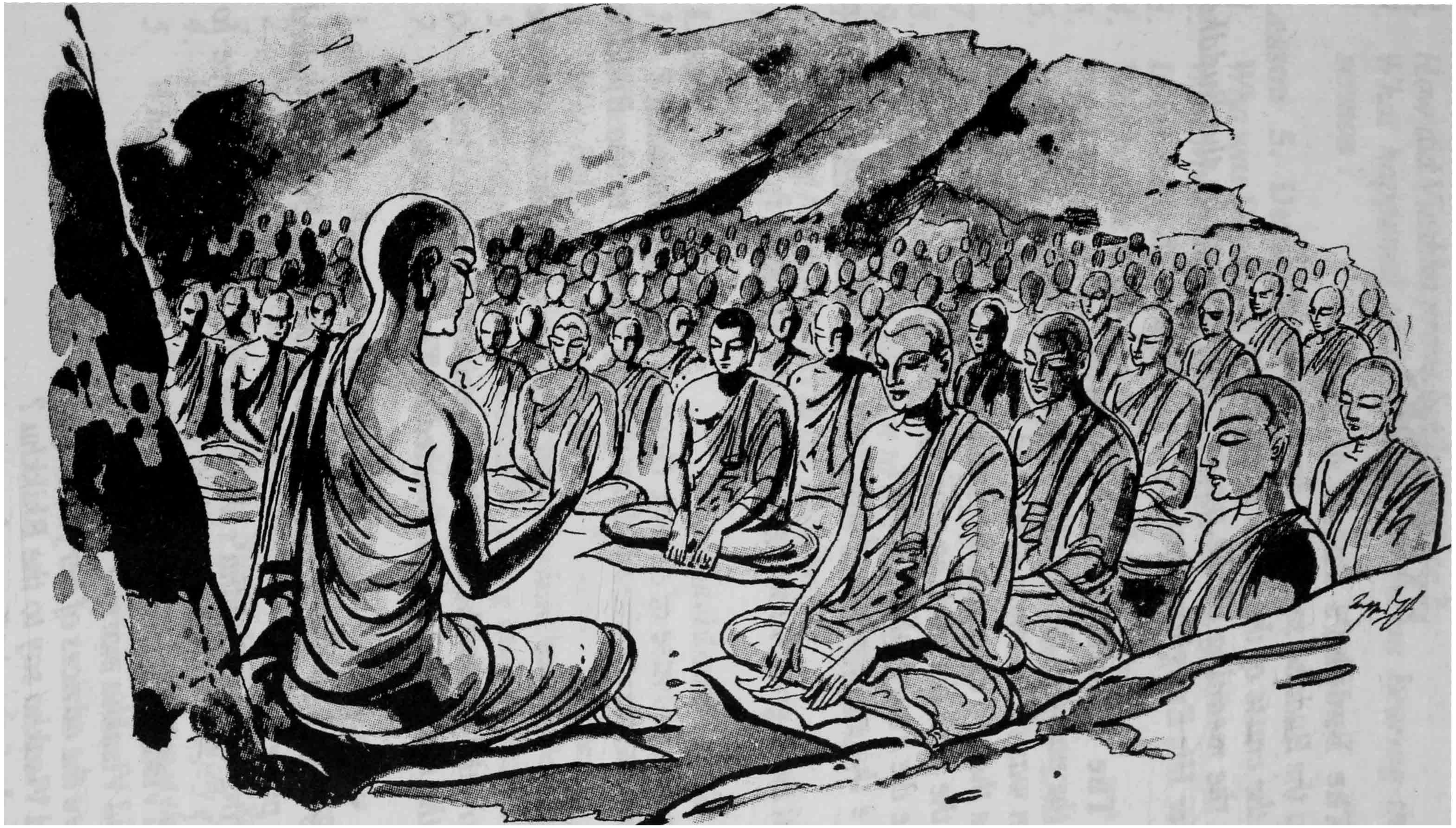
The meeting started three months after the passing away of the Buddha. That meeting is now referred to as the "First Buddhist Council".

The Venerable Maha Kassapa was the president at the First Buddhist Council. The Venerable Upali was chosen to answer questions about the Vinaya, the monks' disciplinary rules. The Venerable Ananda who had the honour of hearing all the sermons from the Buddha and who had an unusually good memory was chosen to recite all the sermons and answer questions about the Dhamma or Teaching.

The First Buddhist Council collected together and arranged the Pali Tipitaka or the Buddhist Scriptures which have been handed down from one generation of monks to another. In the early days of the spread of Buddhism, there were no written records of the Teaching. All the monks had to memorize the Teaching and then teach the next generation of monks in the same way by the oral tradition.

Two other Buddhist Councils of Arahants were held 100 and 236 years later respectively, again to rehearse the Word of the Buddha because attempts were being made to pollute the Pure Teachings.

About 83 B.C., during the reign of the pious Sinhala King, Vatta Gamani Abhaya, a Council of Arahants was held in Sri Lanka and the Tipitaka was, for the first time in the history of Buddhism, put down in writing on ola leaves. This historical event happened at a village called Aluvihara.



Under the patronage of King Ajatasatthu, the First Buddhist Council, was held three months after the death of the Buddha. The venue was Satta Panni Cave at Rajgiri, Bihar.

EXERCISES

Lesson 1 The Buddha's Paean of Joy

1. *What did the Buddha see in his deep meditation ?*
2. *What is the cause of the chain of existence ?*
3. *Explain the meaning of the paean of joy uttered by the Buddha soon after His Enlightenment.*

Lesson 2. The Buddha's First Sermon

1. *What is the name of the Buddha's First sermon ?*
2. *To whom was this sermon preached ?*
3. *What are the two extremes the Buddha asked to give up ?*
4. *What is the path the Buddha advised to follow ?*
5. *What are the Four Noble Truths ?*
6. *What are the eight parts of the Noble Eightfold Path ? Explain briefly.*
7. *Into what three groups the eight factors are grouped ?*

Lesson 3. King Bimbisara

1. *What was the promise of ascetic Gotama to King* Bimbisara *?*
2. *Why were people confused about paying respects to the Buddha and Ven. Kassapa ?*
3. *How did the Buddha make known to the people that he was the teacher ?*
4. *What were the five wishes of King Bimbisara ?*
5. *What is the name of the park donated by King Bimbisara ?*

Lesson 4. Visakha

1. *Who was Visakha ? And how old was she when the Buddha visited her birth place ?*
2. *On hearing of the Buddha's visit what did the father advice to Visakha ?*
3. *What did Visakha possess ?*
4. *Whom did Visakha marry ?*
5. *What were the advices of her father on her wedding day ?*
6. *What did Visakha say to the Bhikkhu ?*
7. *Why was the father-in-law unhappy with her ?*

8. *How did Visakha prove her innocence ?*
9. *What happened to her father-in-law on hearing the Buddha's sermon ?*

Lesson 5. Devadatta

1. *Who was Devadatta ?*
2. *With whom did he enter the order of monks ?*
3. *In his early days, what was he known for ?*
4. *Was he able to attain any stage of sainthood ?*
5. *What happened to him later ?*
6. *What was Devadatta's request to the Buddha ? Did the Buddha accept it ? Why ?*
7. *Who was the chief supporter of Devadatta ?*
8. *Did he succeed in killing the Buddha ?*
9. *What was his first attempt to kill the Buddha ?*
10. *How did Devadatta himself try to kill the Buddha ?*
11. *How did Nalagiri react to the Buddha ?*
12. *What will he be in the future ?*

Lesson 6. Khema

1. *Who was Khema ?*
2. *Who were the two chief female disciples of the Buddha ?*
3. *Who built the monastery for the Buddha ?*
4. *What did the Buddha do when he knew that she had come ?*
5. *What happened to the beautiful young lady of sixteen ?*
6. *What happened to Khema after seeing the lady die ?*
7. *Write your comments on this lesson.*

Lesson 7. Anathapindika

1. *What was the result of Anathapindika's great generosity ?*
2. *Why did he build the Jetavana monastery ?*
3. *How many rainy seasons did the Buddha spend in Jetavana ?*
4. *What are the four kinds of bliss a layman can enjoy ?*
5. *What happened to Anathapindika when he first met the Buddha ?*

Lesson 8. The Buddha and the Farmer Kasibharadvaja

1. *What did the brahmin say when he saw the Buddha ?*
   What was the Buddha's answer ?
2. *What did the brahmin say and do when he realised his error ?*
3. *Did the Buddha accept the food ? Why ?*

Lesson 9. Magandiya

1. *Who was Magandiya and how did she look ?*
2. *Whom did she want to marry ?*
3. *After noticing the parents of Magandiya where did the Buddha go ?*
4. *What happened to Magandiya's father when he saw the Buddha and what did he say?*
5. *What did the Buddha do after hearing Magandiya ?*
6. *What did the brahmin's wife say after seeing the footprint ?*
7. *What did the Buddha say when the brahmin offered the Buddha his daughter in marriage ?*
8. *What happened to the brahmin and his wife after listening to the Buddha ?*
9. *What did Magandiya think and say against the Buddha ?*

Lesson 10. Alavaka, the Demon

1. *Where was Alavaka living, and how was he ?*
2. *Who caught the king when he went hunting in the forest ?*
3. *What was the king's last resort ?*
4. *Why did the Buddha travel to the Demon's cave whole day ?*
5. *What did the Buddha ask the gate-keeper ?*
6. *Describe how the Buddha won the battle with the Demon ?*

Lesson 11. Sujatha and the Discourse on the Seven Types of Wives

1. *To whom was Sujatha married and how was her behaviour ?*
2. *What did the Buddha hear when he visited Anathapindika's house ?*
3. *How many kinds of wives are described by the Buddha ?*
4. *What did Sujatha feel after listening to the discourse and why ?*
5. *Among seven kinds of wives which one did Sujatha prefer ?*

Lesson 12. Ananda

1. *Name some of the monks who served the Buddha during His earlier days.*
2. *What was the result of disobedience to the Buddha by Ven. Nagasamala ?*
3. *At what age did the Buddha ask the Bhikkhus to choose his attendent ?*
4. *How many conditions did Ven.Ananda put to the Buddha ?*
5. *What was Ven.Ananda's relation with the Buddha ?*
6. *For what did the Buddha recognise the Ven.Ananda as first ?*
7. *What are the other contributions of Ven.Ananda ?*
8. *At what age did Ven.Ananda pass away ?*

Lesson 13. King Ajatasattu

1. *Whose son was Prince Ajatasattu ?*
2. *Why did he try to kill his father ?*
3. *What was his father's response to his murder attempt ?*
4. *How did his mother try to give food to King Bimbisara ?*
5. *How did Ajatasattu kill his father ?*
6. *What thought came to Ajatasattu's mind when he heard that a son was born to him ?*
7. *Describe the love extended by King Bimbisara towards Ajatasattu.*
8. *What did Ajatasattu realize after listening to his mother ?*

Lesson 14. King Pasenadi Kosala (Part I)

1. *What was the relation between King Pasenadi Kosala and King Bimbisara ?*
2. *Who was Mallika ? Was she a good wife ?*
3. *What are the four things which should not be looked down upon ?*
4. *What was Buddha's attitude towards women ?*
5. *In what sense did the Buddha say that loved ones bring suffering ?*
6. *Who was his son ?*

Lesson 15. King Pasenadi Kosala (Part II)

1. *What do you learn from this lesson ?*

Lesson 16. Sundari who attempted to discredit the Buddha

1. *Why were some other ascetics jealous of the Buddha ?*
2. *What was their plan to discredit the Buddha using Sundari ?*
3. *What was the Buddha's advice to his disciples ?*
4. *What did people think about the Buddha and his disciples after observing them ?*

Lesson 17. Sigala who worshipped every direction

1. *Why was Sigala worshipping all directions ?*
2. *What was the Buddha's interpretation of worshipping the directions ?*
3. *What four evil conduct should be avoided ?*
4. *What are the six ways of wasting one's wealth to be avoided ?*

Lesson 18. Ambapali

1. *Who offered the Garden of Mangoes to the Buddha to rest, and where ?*
2. *When Ambapali approached the Buddha for the first time what did she see and how did she feel ?*
3. *What request did the nobles of Vesali make to Ambapali and what was her reply ?*
4. *How Ambapali is compared with the lotus ?*
5. *Where did the Buddha spend His last rainy season ?*

Lesson 19. Jivaka

1. *Who saved the child Jivaka ?*
2. *In what field did Jivaka become an expert ?*
3. *How did Jivaka help Ajatasattu ?*
4. *What was his attainment ?*

Lesson 20. The quarrel at Kosambi

1. *Which two parties quarrelled ?*
2. *Who ministered to the Buddha when he was in Parileyyaka Forest?*
3. *What did the people of Kosambi do ?*
4. *What was Buddha's advice ?*

Lesson 21. Upali

1. *What did the religious teachers request Upali to do ?*
2. *When Upali asked the Buddha to make him a follower what was Buddha's advise to him ?*
3. *After accepting Upali as a follower what was the Buddha's advise to him ?*

Lesson 22. Sona

1. *How was Sona brought up ?*
2. *Why did Sona become a monk ?*
3. *Why did not Sona get the good results of meditation ?*
4. *How did the Buddha make Sona understand ?*

Lesson 23. Maha Pajapati Gotami

1. *Who was Maha Pajapati Gotami ?*
2. *Why did she approach the Buddha ?*
3. *When the Buddha refused to make her a nun what did she do ?*
4. *Why was the establishment of the Order of Nuns a historic event ?*

Lesson 24. The Buddha Condemned the caste system

1. *Was there a caste system during the Buddha's time ?*
2. *What were the four castes ?*
3. *According to the Buddha who becomes high or low ?*
4. *Write the historic statement made by the Buddha ?*

Lesson 25. The Mirror of the Dhamma

1. *Why were the dead monks and lay devotees Sotapannas ?*
2. *Who is not going to be born in the lower worlds ?*
3. *How does a person attain sainthood ?*
4. *Where and to whom the sermon 'The Mirror of the Dhamma' was given ?*

Lesson 26. The Buddha's attitude to miracles ?

1. *Who asked the Buddha to appoint a Bhikkhu to perform miracles ?*
2. *How many kinds of miracles are there ?*
3. *What kind of supernormal power helps people to end suffering ?*
4. *Describe the incident of miraculous power shown by Pindola.*

Lesson 27. The Buddha's illness and announcement

1. *How did the Buddha suppress His sickness ?*
2. *Why did Ven. Ananda think that the Buddha would not pass away?*
3. *What should be one's refuge when the Buddha passed away ?*
4. *What hint did the Buddha give to Ven. Ananda ?*
5. *Why did Dhammarama not come to pay respects to the Buddha ?*
6. *Who honours the Buddha most ?*

Lesson 28. The Last days of the Buddha

1. *What records are placed in the Maha Parinibbana Sutta ?*
2. *Where did the Buddha decide to spend his last days ?*
3. *Which great disciples of the Buddha had passed away before the Buddha ?*
4. *What were the Buddha's usual teachings in his last days ?*

Lesson 29. The Buddha's last meal

1. *Who offered the last meal to the Buddha ?*
2. *What is the name of the meal prepared by Cunda ?*
3. *What was the Buddha's advice to Cunda regarding Sukaramddava ?*
4. *What happened to the Buddha after eating the meal ?*
5. *What did the Buddha tell Ven. Ananda regarding Cunda's meal ?*
6. *What are the four places to be visited by the faithful followers of the Buddha ?*
7. *Why was Ven. Ananda crying ?*
8. *What message did the Buddha send through Ven. Ananda to the people of Kusinara ?*

Lesson 30. Subhadda

1. *Why did Subhadda go to the Buddha ?*
2. *What did Buddha say to Ven. Ananda when he tried to stop Subhaddha approaching the Buddha ?*
3. *Where are the holy saints found ?*

Lesson 31. The Buddha's final words of advice

1. *Who is our teacher after the Buddha passed away ?*
2. *Were there anyone who had doubts to be cleared? Why ?*
3. *What were the Buddha's last words ?*
4. *How did the Buddha pass away ? And when ?*

Lesson 32. The First Buddhist Council

1. *What made Ven. Maha Kassapa to call for a meeting ?*
2. *Who made the arrangements for the First Council and where ?*
3. *How many Arahats were chosen ?*
4. *What did Ven. Ananda do for attaining Arahathood ?*
5. *Who was the president of the First Buddhist Council ?*
6. *Who were choosen to answer questions about the Vinaya and Dhamma ?*
7. *How was the Tipitaka handed down from generation to generation?*
8. *When were the second and the third Buddhist Councils held ?*
9. *When was the Tipitaka put down in writing ?*

DEDICATION OF MERIT

May the merit and virtue
accrued from this work
adorn the Buddha's Pure Land,
repay the four great kindnesses above,
and relieve the suffering of
those on the three paths below.

May those who see or hear of these efforts
generate Bodhi-mind,
spend their lives devoted to the Buddha Dharma,
and finally be reborn together in
the Land of Ultimate Bliss.
Homage to Amita Buddha!

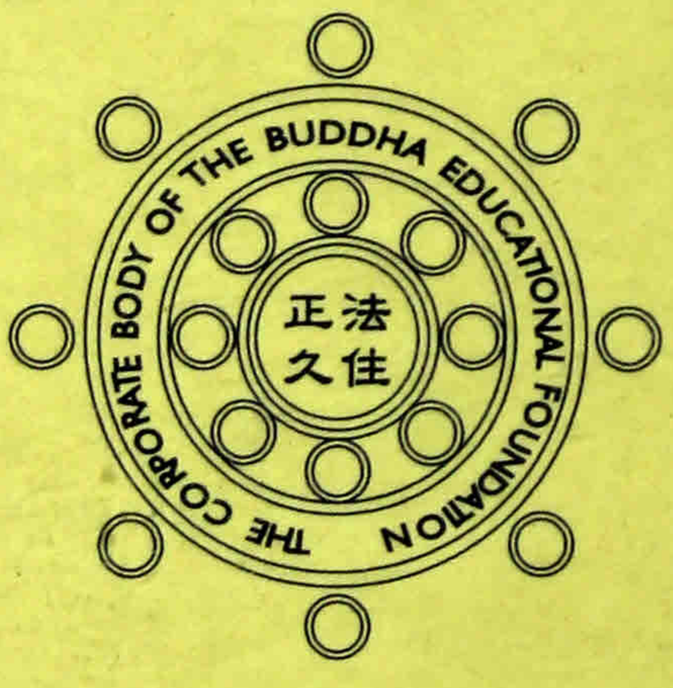
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